

ΠΡΟΣ ΕΒΡΑΙΟΥΣ.



TO THE HEBREWS.

ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ



REVISED VERSION.

ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ

JOHN ELIOT HOWARD.



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THE  
EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

A Revised Translation,

*WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES.*

BY

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F.R.S.

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\* \* The reader will see that I have sought to avoid the *Revised English* of the New Revision, and to retain as much as possible the standard English of the Old Version.



# THE GOSPEL

IN THE "HEBREWS" AND "ROMANS."

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THERE are two aspects of the work of Christ mentioned in the epistle to the Romans, ch. xv.

"Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers; and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy."<sup>1</sup>

I regret that the Revisionists have retained the word "Gentiles," which is misleading to an English reader; but I must needs use the expression in reference to the salvation of an individual of any other nationality than that of the Jew, in my further remarks on this subject.

Great obscurity and confusion have arisen from want of distinguishing between the Jewish and the Gentile aspects of the work of our Lord.

As a Jew, He was "made under the law," and could say, "Thus it becometh *us* to fulfil all righteousness." He glorified the law, and made it honourable. He was the true Israel of God, on whose obedience the Father could ever look with infinite delight; and He

<sup>1</sup> Or in the Revised Version, "For I say that Christ hath been made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, that He might confirm the promises given unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy."

was in his own person "*the Amen*" to confirm or establish (for such is the meaning of the word *amen*) the promises made of God unto the fathers.

In the epistle to the Hebrews we have given to us a commentary on the work of Christ as fulfilling all the types of the ceremonial law. Everything in the epistle has reference to "the Old Covenant." I do not think it possible to understand this teaching truly, unless we learn to lay aside our conventional Gentile ideas; and so to mould our conceptions on what God has revealed to us in the book of the Old Covenant. There we behold the strong and immutable foundations on which the great and glorious promises are made to rest.

The key-note to the teaching of this epistle, is struck in the opening declaration that God has spoken to us in these last days by and in his Son. Thus is brought in "perfection," the *τελείωσις*, or full accomplishment of the great purposes of God in the work of his Son. As the one unfailing servant of Jehovah, Christ has magnified the law, and made it honourable; a work which he wrought out *fully*, in contrast to that other servant spoken of by Isaiah, viz., the failing nation of Israel.

We are exhorted to press forward to the understanding of this *perfection*; as contrasted with the "beginnings" taught under the first covenant, which *made nothing perfect*. The sacrifices then offered could not make the worshipper perfect as pertaining to the conscience; but contrasted with this is the one offering of Christ, by which he hath made his people perfect for evermore, as regards their standing in grace before God.



As a believer writing to believers, I specially direct attention to the concluding words of the epistle to the Hebrews, rendered in the Revised Version :

“Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the Great Shepherd of the sheep with *the blood of the eternal covenant*, even our Lord Jesus, make you perfect in every good thing to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.”<sup>2</sup>

If I were a Jewish believer I should add my amen to this; and consider, moreover, that the whole epistle was especially written for my instruction; that everything which it contained was *Hebrew* in its aspect; and as such the *eternal covenant* would become interesting to me as being the *new covenant* in contradistinction to the *old*; bearing with it future blessings in store (as taught both by Isaiah and Paul) for the ancient people when again brought back to their inheritance.

In the memorable conversation of Christ with the woman of Samaria, he enunciated this important truth, that “salvation is of the Jews.” This is not to be lightly passed over, but appears as the summing up of the purposes and promises of Jehovah. From the era when the family of Noah set foot on the renewed earth, under the bow of covenant promise, one particular line was marked out as that in which the knowledge of the NAME was to be preserved; viz., that of Shem (“the name”); whilst a widely-extended expanse of the world was allotted to Japheth the elder, with a preponderance of earthly over spiritual

<sup>2</sup> Revised Translation.

favours. A darker destiny was reserved for Ham, on which I will not dwell; nor shall I attempt to answer the man that replies against God and asserts the injustice of such an exhibition of sovereignty and electing grace.

"God is His own interpreter,  
And He will make it plain."

My business in this introduction is with facts of God's revelation; and not with theories of the mind of man, occupied with ranging over the world of thought in search of something more pleasing to his natural intellect.

In following down the stream of time I find Abram the Shemite called and chosen of God. His name is changed to Abraham, and to Abraham and his seed are the promises made; and these concentrate in Christ *the Son*, who inherited a better name than all.

"Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified."<sup>a</sup>

But we Gentiles are not of the chosen race, and though continually having experience of the goodness of God, yet *by nature* altogether failing in gratitude for this goodness, not even wishing to acquaint ourselves with God, nor desiring the knowledge of his ways; in fact, sinners of the Gentiles; and if, stirred up to desire an escape from coming judgment, we open the Bible to see what consolation we can find, the first passages we meet with might seem to convey discouragement, like the effect of the words of the Lord to the Syrophœnician woman, "I am not sent but unto the *lost sheep of the house of Israel*."

<sup>a</sup> See Isa. xlix. 3.

How important then the office of the evangelist; for "how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

No doubt the Bible itself is often blest as conveying the message without human instrumentality, but we see that the eunuch, though reading and meditating on the Scripture, was by the express guidance of the Spirit helped by the living man. "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near and join thyself to this chariot." "And Philip opened his mouth and beginning from this Scripture preached unto him *Jesus*." <sup>4</sup>

This is sometimes a little forgotten. A French-Canadian widow, settling amongst Protestants in another part of the same country, was supplied with a Bible in her own tongue. This she began to read whilst under the fear of the denunciation of her priest. She opened first on part of the Old Testament describing the wars of the Jews, and thought within herself, "Now I see why the priest does not wish me to read this book, containing as it does all these dreadful records." She laid the book aside for a time, but a second time opened on the sermon on the mount. Again she thought, "The priest must be right, for this morality is so exalted that I never could attain to it." The book was for a time relinquished, but, moved (we must believe) by something higher than mere curiosity, she began to read the epistle to the Romans, and in doing so found peace to her soul—a peace in which she was afterwards confirmed by

<sup>4</sup> Revised Translation.

the teaching of a Christian French-speaking pastor, whose visits brought her great joy, which she expressed in the exclamation, "*Que je suis aise !*" She thought that no one could so well have understood and sympathised with her happiness in having found Christ and salvation.

It is needful then that we should remember that it is only in a secondary sense that the Scriptures can be called the word of God. The two first verses of the Hebrews bring before us the precedent and all-important truth, that God hath spoken to us in and by his Son. All rests upon this, and without the knowledge of this glorious good news there is no gospel for fallen humanity. "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will to men." On the other hand, whenever Christ is preached we therein may and ought to rejoice. I have occupied the seat of the unlearned whilst listening with attention to an eloquent sermon in a language unintelligible to me. Nevertheless, I could gather some ideas from the earnest words and gestures of the preacher; and when from expostulatory and apparently minatory sentences he brightened towards the close into a strain of evident peace and good-will, I noticed that he repeated again and again a short sentence, which I determined to recollect. Its importance was further evidenced by its forming the subject of a hymn in which we were afterwards called to unite. On the first opportunity I repeated, as well as I could, the sentence to one to whom both languages were familiar. At once he said, "Why that is Jesus Christ," although he could not identify the rest of the sentence. So that I was happy to think that I

had been listening to the preaching of Jesus Christ, though unable even to detect his name.

The relevancy of this anecdote to what follows will appear when it is understood that I am most anxious, whilst endeavouring "to discriminate things that differ,"<sup>5</sup> in no wise to depart from or seem to discredit the good old gospel of the grace of God; as this is now faithfully preached by thousands of godly men, both at home and abroad — heralds of God's salvation in the earth, I account their very footsteps blessed.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace."

Yet must I suggest in all faithfulness to some of these whether in certain points they do not obscure the message they deliver by confounding the difference between Jew and Gentile, and intermingling with Christianity the relics of effete Romanism; as for instance in the word *Testament* from the Vulgate. Another more serious form of error may be stated as ultra-Arminianism. This sort of doctrine is quite forgetful of the fact that the law was "*weak through the flesh*," and that the trial of man's nature ceased at the cross. It was then proved utterly without strength, and Christ died for "*the ungodly*," "*for sinners*," for those who had no power to make themselves worthy of Him.

The gospel was to be preached by our Lord's own command among all nations, *beginning at Jerusalem*. So St. Luke informs us in the last chapter of his gospel; but in his continued narrative he tells us

<sup>5</sup> Phil. i. 10.

how only a portion of the Jews were brought to repentance; and in the last chapter of the Acts he shows how the apostle Paul turns away from the Jews, and seeing their hearts were hardened, exclaims, "Be it known therefore unto you, that *the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles*, and that they will hear it."

This is the second aspect of the work of our Lord, that the Gentiles should glorify God for his mercy. In the epistle to the Romans he explains the character of this salvation, shows his own special call to be the bearer of this precious gift; and also that it is involved in the *gospel*, which is the *power of God unto salvation*. Therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. It is not the natural produce of the soil of man's heart. It is not to be found in any one among the nations, unless it is sent to them as a *foreign blessing*.

In this grand treatise on salvation the apostle is careful to build on the predestined purposes of God. He shows us how the favour of God, which before had been so largely restricted to the seed of Abraham, passes over to the Gentiles; during the period when, with the exception of a remnant according to the election of grace, the Jews are suffering national rejection on account of their unbelief. The Gentile branch is grafted in, and partakes of the root and fatness of the olive tree; but this entirely *through faith*; so that we who are thus privileged should not be high-minded, but fear.

Christ, and in Him a full salvation, are sent us in the gospel, which is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth. All then rests upon *faith*,

and all is individual and personal (rather than national) blessing.

The concluding words of the epistle seal upon the mind the conviction that it is *the obedience* of faith which brings the soul into the position of humbled and thankful *subjection* to the only wise God, to whom he ascribes glory through Jesus Christ for ever.

This *obedience of faith* overthrows our confidence in any national religious position before God, and leaves us debtors to *mercy* alone, as is gloriously set forth by the apostle Paul.

This epistle to the Romans is, then, a divinely inspired treatise on the righteousness of God <sup>6</sup> revealed in the way of faith. The apostle sweeps away every hope arising from the efforts of the creature, and brings in all under condemnation, whether Jew or Gentile.

The Gentiles have no share either in the national adoption of the Jews, or in the distinguishing glory which rested on Israel as the peculiar treasure of Jehovah.<sup>7</sup> Neither have they any interest as such in either the Old or the New Covenant. The giving of the law was alone to Israel, and the service of God pertained to them; and to them also and their seed were the promises.

All idea of national religion for the Gentiles is absent—all thought of bringing the nations into church relationship with God is repudiated by the apostle. The wild branches are grafted into the good olive tree simply by faith, and by faith alone remain in a position to draw sap from thence. So anxious is Paul to show that ordinances can in themselves

<sup>6</sup> App. C.

<sup>7</sup> Rom. ix. 3-5.

avail nothing to the righteousness of God, that he thanks God that he baptized none of the Corinthians but Crispus and Gaius.

The righteousness of God is in the way of free gift or grace ; and is imputed not to him that worketh, as if it were wages for service rendered : " Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned as of grace, but of debt ; but to him that worketh *not*, but believeth on him that justifieth the *ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness."

Here then we see at large what it was that Paul preached ; namely, *a full Christ for empty sinners*, and he rested entirely on the power of the Holy Spirit to render his message effectual. Glorious good news, which the blessed God would have preached to every creature that is under heaven. There is no need to ask God to be reconciled to man. He has effected all this, and the Lamb once *slain*, but now alive again, bears for ever stamped upon his blessed person the sealed assurance of a finished work. In raising his Son again from the dead, God gave a pledge to every individual of the human race of full pardon and peace in Him.

Hence this is the accepted time and the day of salvation. If I want to be assured of my interest in this salvation, I have to enquire whether I have submitted in *the obedience of faith* to be humbled under God's testimony to my individual lost estate ; and whether I have *fled* for refuge to lay hold upon *the hope* set before me.

And this *Hope* is laid up in heaven. It is not to be attained by any effort of mine ; for " it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of



God that sheweth mercy." It is not committed to the care of a close corporation called the Church, nor entrusted to the priests and ministers of such a body of people to make merchandize of at their pleasure, and to say, "*Quantum nobis profuit hæc Christi fabula!*" It is not within the custody of St. Peter, who could not even keep *himself* in the hour of temptation. And why not? Simply for this reason: The *Hope* is *Christ Himself*; the anchor is within the veil.

How then am I to know that Christ is mine? Christ assures me that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners, that he came to save the lost. If then I have in any other method attained righteousness, Christ is not mine. If I am not lost, I am not one of those whom Christ came to save. If I am not a sinner, I may lay aside the gospels. He that is baptized in unconscious infancy can only consider that he was thereby introduced into the privileges and responsibilities of *Christendom*, whatever these may be. He is not thereby *made a Jew*, nor is his individual salvation furthered; he is simply constituted a nominal Christian in an incipient stage. As a Gentile therefore, as one among the many included under this title, I rejoice to find that the mystery which was kept secret since the world began is now made manifest, and by prophetic writings according to the commandment of the everlasting God made known to all *nations* for the obedience of faith.<sup>8</sup>

This unquestioning obedience becomes our happy privilege, and confers upon us the same fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ as if our names,

<sup>8</sup> *δια γραφῶν προφητικῶν.* Rom. xvi. 26.

like Tertius, who wrote this epistle, or Quartus, a brother, were inscribed in the book itself. That we are of the same family we know by the Spirit witnessing with our spirit that we are children of God.

I have no other means of ascertaining that I am one of those interested in the testamentary disposition of peace left by Christ to his disciples. If asked to find reason for hope in looking within for evidence that I am one of these, my soul would be cast down indeed; but if the enemy would seek to deprive me of my *Hope* he cannot dispossess me of my "will" to be saved; and if he could persuade me that I never yet were truly a disciple, I should only flee with the greater earnestness to grasp this Hope by faith, it being none other than Christ Himself; and I know that whosoever *will* may take the water of life freely.

This is something very different from believing in a Testament.

Christianity was at first a bright and glorious religion, of unmistakable spiritual power; separating those who received it from the world, and bringing them at once into the goodly fellowship, not only of apostles, but of all whom these chosen witnesses taught; giving them *oneness in the love of the Spirit*, a common possession to all, and *oneness in the Truth* into which they were initiated—Truth which abode in them, and should be with them for ever.<sup>o</sup>

I am not so insensible to the teaching of the epistles as to suppose these Christians more perfect *in conduct* than believers of the present day, nor yet in

<sup>o</sup> 2 Epistle John v. 2.

knowledge (in one sense), for we must remember how small a portion of the New Testament was written for many years of the Church's existence; and we must reflect how little, apart from the epistle to the Hebrews, the Gentile believers could understand of the Old Testament except through the corrupt Septuagint translation. Neither would I overestimate the perfectness of their Church union, of which I have recorded my value in a little work called *Two Apostles and One Church*.

But there was at least one feature of the early Church of which we must regret the loss; and yet whilst we regret also bear in mind that the loss is not inevitably our portion. We may, through God's grace, recover *certainly of individual salvation*.

In order to do this we must return to *simplicity of faith*, and we must be sealed by the Spirit; for "these things," says another apostle, "have I written unto you; that ye may *know that ye have eternal life*, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God."<sup>1</sup>

I suppose that it will be generally admitted that the great hindrance to the promulgation of the gospel amongst nominal Christians is that they suppose they are already in possession of all that can be thus offered for their acceptance. They are rich and full, and are sent empty away. If, however, this fulness and these riches be examined into, the result is the discovery of a state of real poverty and miserable sinnership. There is no balm in this Gilead, no widely-opened door into paradise itself such as Luther spoke of.

<sup>1</sup> 1 John v. 13; Rev. Trans.

The consequence of this state of *unreality* is, that a superficial varnish of ritualistic religion covers a structure, of which the possible *αποστασία* must be evident to the reflective observer.

It is not, however, my purpose to dwell upon the future, but to seek individual establishment in the truth for the present. Amidst increasing unsettlement it is needful to dig down beneath the surface, to cast aside the rubbish which is the accumulation of ages; and to be satisfied with nothing that does not rest wholly and entirely on the Rock of Ages.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is the Rock of Ages."<sup>2</sup> Judaism and heathenism have intermingled their streams with the current of Christianity as it comes down to us with the lapse of time. It is needful to have recourse to the primitive fountains, and to drink from thence living water.

What then has a Gentile sinner to do with the New Covenant? We have seen that the Old Covenant was concluded with Israel, and that no other nation was ever placed under the law as given through Moses. In Hebrews viii. we are told that the New Covenant is made with the house of Israel. How then can a Gentile be interested in a matter so exclusively Jewish?

The answer to this question is found in the explanation of the MYSTERY, in which that which St. Paul calls *his* gospel more especially consists, and of

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah xxvi. 3, 4.

which no trace is found in the epistle to the Hebrews. How then can it be imagined that he is the writer?

The mystery is explained in few words in Eph. iii. 6, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.

And again, more at large, Eph. ii. 11, which I will emphasise as we go along.

Wherefore remember that ye nominal Christians, being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, although you profess that your introduction by baptism into relationship with God stands in the place of circumcision, and that you are now the Israel of God, were really without Christ, and all your religion baseless.

You were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and though you boasted of your religious privileges, were strangers to the covenants of promise, having no well-founded hope, practically without God in the world.<sup>3</sup>

But now *in Christ Jesus* ye (*believers*) who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

That is to say, you have a title to every blessing through the blood of an everlasting covenant. Christ Himself being the victim, you are brought through his blood *nigh* to God, so that he hath raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*. Whilst others are as you were, children of wrath, professing to worship God, though miserable and unpardoned sinners, you are saved by grace through faith; for *He is our peace*.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. ii. 11, 12.

Your worship then is the worship of *children* of God, worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth. "For ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female : for ye are all one *man* in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise."<sup>4</sup>

You are quickened with a new life flowing from the risen Christ into all the members of his body, which can be thus so truly looked upon as one with himself that he could say to Saul, when persecuting the poor Christians, "Why persecutest thou *me*?"

This is a mystery indeed, and as much hidden from the natural mind of the unregenerate man as if it had never been written in Scripture ; for "except a man be born anew he cannot see the kingdom of God."<sup>4</sup>

I cannot then do better, in conclusion, than add an earnest prayer to the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation ; that by the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit both the reader and writer may be led into the more full understanding and realization of the things of this kingdom of love and peace, the kingdom of the Son of his love ; for whose sake we ask this and every blessing.

LORD'S MEADE, *September*, 1881.

<sup>4</sup> Revised Translation.

## TO THE HEBREWS.

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### CHAPTER I.

GOD, who in manifold portions and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers in the prophets,

2 Hath at the end of these days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds ;

3 Who being the effulgence of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself made purification of our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high ;

4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they.

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee"? And again, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son"?

6 And when he again bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, "And let all the angels of God worship him."

7 And of the angels he saith, "Who maketh his angels winds,<sup>1</sup> and his ministers a flame of fire."

8 But of the Son *he saith*, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."

9 "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

10 And, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a robe.<sup>2</sup>

12 And as a vesture<sup>3</sup> shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."<sup>4</sup>

13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, "Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool"?

14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service on account of those who shall be heirs of salvation?

## CHAPTER II.

THEREFORE we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast,

<sup>1</sup> πνεύματα (*conf.* 2 Kings xix. 7, 35.)

<sup>2</sup> כִּתְּרָה, usually the outer garment of the Orientals, especially a *precious* one. 1 Kings xxii. 10, &c., The kings "put on their robes." The universe is the *robe* of the Almighty.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Ps. cii. 26.

<sup>4</sup> For various readings see Alford *in loco*.



and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward ;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him* ;

4 God also bearing together with *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will ?

5 For not unto angels did he put in subjection the *habitable* world to come, whereof we speak.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him ?

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels ; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands :

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

9 But we behold him, even Jesus, crowned with glory and honour, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, that he by the grace of God should taste death for all.

10 For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of One : for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

12 Saying, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I sing praise unto thee."

13 And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me."

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that has the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

16 For verily not of *the nature of* angels did he lay hold; but he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham.

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

18 For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

### CHAPTER III.

WHEREFORE, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also *was* Moses in all his house.

3 For this *man* was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

4 For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* God.

5 And Moses verily *was* faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if only we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, "To day if ye shall hear his voice,

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, like as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 Where your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in *their* heart; and these have not known my ways.

11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.")

12 Take heed, brethren, that at no time there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God.

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called "To day;" lest any one of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if at all events we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

15 Since it is said, "To day if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation."

16 For who, when they had heard, did provoke: was it not all that came out of Egypt by Moses?

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years : *was it* not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness ?

18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that were disobedient ?

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

#### CHAPTER IV.

LET us therefore fear, lest, perhaps, a promise being left of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2 For indeed unto us have good news been proclaimed, as well as unto them : but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*.

3 For we which have believed are entering into the rest, as he said, "As I have sworn in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest:" although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh *day* on this wise, "And God did rest the seventh day from all his works."

5 And again in this *place*, "They shall not enter into my rest."

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein ; and they to whom the good news were first proclaimed entered not in because of unbelief :

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, "To day," after so long a time ; as it is said, "To day, if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

8 For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a Sabbath-rest to the people of God.

10 For he that has entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his works, as God *did* from his own.

11 Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

12 For the word of God *is* living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing through even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and laid open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one who was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

## CHAPTER V.

FOR every high priest being taken from among men is appointed for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

2 Who can deal gently with the ignorant, and those that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

3 And by reason hereof is bound, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron.

5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, "Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee."

6 As he saith also in another *place*, "Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

7 Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and having been heard on account of his reverence;

8 (For though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered);

9 And having been made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be explained, seeing ye have become dull of hearing.

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13 For every one that useth milk is inexperienced in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

## CHAPTER VI.

THEREFORE leaving the beginnings of the doctrine of Christ, let us press on unto its completion; not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.

2 Of the doctrine of washings, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.<sup>5</sup>

3 And this will we do, if God indeed permit.

4 For, as for those who were once enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

5 And tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the coming age,

6 And *then* fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame.

7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is also dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

8 But that which beareth thorns and briers *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto cursing; whose end *is* to be burned.

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of

<sup>5</sup> In all which things the Jewish proselyte may be presumed to have been instructed.

you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

10 For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end.

12 That ye be not slothful, but imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself.

14 Saying, "Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee."

15 And so, having patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and the oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife.

17 On which ground God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, interposed with an oath:

18 That by two immutable things in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

19 Which we have as an anchor of the soul, *a hope* both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made for ever an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.



## CHAPTER VII.

FOR this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him ;

2 To whom also Abraham divided a tenth part of all ; being first by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace ;

3 Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life ; but made like unto the Son of God ; abideth a priest continually.

4 Now consider how great this man *was*, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law ; that is, of their brethren, though these come out of the loins of Abraham ;

6 But he whose genealogy is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

8 And here men that die receive tithes ; but there he *receiveth them*, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would *there* have been for another priest to rise after the order of Melchisedec, and to be called not after the order of Aaron?

12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

14 For *it is* evident that our Lord arose out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priests.

15 And it is yet far more evident: if after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an indissoluble life.

17 For he testifieth, "Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

19 (For the law made nothing perfect), but there is the bringing in of a better hope, by the which we draw nigh unto God.

20 And inasmuch as it was not without an oath,

21 (For those priests were made without an oath but this with an oath by him that said unto him, "The Lord sware and will not change his purpose, Thou *art* a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec: ")

22 By so much Jesus hath become a surety of a better covenant.<sup>6</sup>

23 And they truly were priests many in number, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death :

24 But he, because he continueth ever, hath an untransferable priesthood.

25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

26 For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens ;

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's : for this he did once for all, when he offered up himself.

28 For the law appointeth men high priests which have infirmity ; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *appointeth* the Son, who is perfected for evermore.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Now of the things which we are speaking *this is* the chief *point* : We have such an high priest, who is seated on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens ;

2 A minister of the holy places, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices : wherefore *it is* of necessity that this one have somewhat also to offer.

<sup>6</sup> The "surety" here being "the victim."—2 C. ix. 17.

4 For if indeed he were on earth, he would not be a priest, since there are *priests* that offer gifts according to the law :

5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle : for, "See," saith he, *that* thou make all " things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."

6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

7 For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

8 For finding fault with them, he saith, " Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah :

9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt ; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

10 For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord ; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them also upon their hearts : and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people :

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord : for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest.

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

13 In that he saith, "A new *covenant*," he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away.

## CHAPTER IX.

THEN even the first *covenant* had ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

2 For there was a tabernacle prepared; the first, wherein *was* the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread, and the golden censer; which is called the Holy place.

3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies;

4 Which had the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

5 And above it the cherubims of glory overshadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak severally.

6 Now when these things were thus prepared, the priests went continually into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service *of God*.

7 But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people:

8 The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while the first tabernacle was as yet standing:

9 Which *was* a figure for the time then present, according to which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make the worshipper perfect, as pertaining to the conscience ;

10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and righteousnesses of the flesh, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation.

11 But Christ being come an high priest of the then future<sup>7</sup> good things—through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation—

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once for all into the holy place ; having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats (and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean) sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh :

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ?

15 And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that by means of death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.<sup>8</sup>

16 For where a covenant *is made*, there must also of necessity be brought in the death of the appointed *victim*.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> γερουσιον according to various MSS.; “of the *then* future good things” may be the meaning if μελλουσιον be adopted.

<sup>8</sup> Compare Romans iii. 25.

<sup>9</sup> So Moses, the mediator of the Old Covenant, brings the blood

17 For a covenant is of force over dead *victims*, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the appointed *victim* liveth.<sup>1</sup>

18 Whereupon neither the first *covenant* was consecrated without blood.

19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled the very book itself, and all the people,

20 Saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God hath confirmed for you."

21 In like manner he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

22 And almost all things are according to the law purified with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

23 *It was* therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

24 For Christ is not entered into holy places made with hands, antitypes of the true; but into heaven itself, now to make his appearance in the presence of God for us;

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

26 For then must he often have suffered since the

in evidence of the death of the victims having taken place, in Exodus xxiv.

<sup>1</sup> Before the victims were slain, the people worshipped *afar off*, afterwards Moses and the elders went up and saw the God of Israel.

foundation of the world : but now once at the consummation of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this—the judgment :

28 So Christ, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear the second time apart from sin to those that wait for him,—unto salvation.

## CHAPTER X.

For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things, they can never with those same sacrifices which they offer year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered ? because that the worshippers once purified should have had no more conscience of sins.

3 But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year.

4 For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, “Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me :

6 In whole burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God.”

8 Above when he said, “Sacrifice and offering and whole burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein* ;” the which are offered by the law ;



9 Then said he, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10 By the which will we have been sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest indeed standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, the which can never take away sins :

12 But this man—after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever—sat down on the right hand of God ;

13 From henceforth expecting "till his enemies be made his footstool"

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

15 *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us : for after that he had said before,

16 "This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them ;"

17 *Then he said*, And "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

18 Now where remission of these *is, there is* no more offering for sin.

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy places by the blood of Jesus,

20 By the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way,<sup>2</sup> through the veil, that is to say, his flesh ;

<sup>2</sup> The word *πρόσφατον* is literally "newly slain," but there is no word in English which answers to it.

21 And *having* an high priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and washed as to the body with purifying water.

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering (for he *is* faithful that promised);

24 And let us consider one another to stir up unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no longer a sacrifice for sins.

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fierceness of fire, which shall devour the adversaries.

28 A man that hath set at nought Moses' law dieth without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith *it* was consecrated<sup>3</sup> an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, "Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord." And again, "The Lord shall judge his people."

<sup>3</sup> Compare chap. ix. 18. I submit this translation as a possible rendering.

31 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were enlightened, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

34 For ye both had compassion on them that were in bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing that ye have for yourselves in heaven a better and an enduring substance.<sup>4</sup>

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise.

37 For yet a very little while, and "he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

38 Now "the just shall live by faith;" but if *he* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

39 But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition; but of them that have faith to the saving of the soul.

## CHAPTER XI.

Now faith is the substance<sup>5</sup> of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

<sup>4</sup> Compare chap. xi. 1, *ὑπαρξίς*, contrasted with *ὑπόστασις*. Chap. xi. properly begins *here*.

<sup>5</sup> Or "confident expectation," *realizing*, as we say, the things

2 For by this the elders obtained a good witness.

3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made out of things which do appear.

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying in respect of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he exists, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

7 By faith Noah being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

11 By faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she

was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, *so many* as the stars of heaven in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them, and greeted them from afar, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a fatherland.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

16 But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly : wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God : for he hath prepared for them a city.

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac : and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*,

18 Of whom it was said, "That in Isaac shall thy seed be called :"

19 Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead ; from whence also he received him in a figure.

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph ; and did obeisance upon the top of his staff.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix A.

22 By faith Joseph, when finishing his course, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw *he was* a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.<sup>7</sup>

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

28 By faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of the blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them.

29 By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry *land*: which the Egyptians assaying to do were swallowed up.

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

31 By faith Rahab the harlot perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, *of* Barak also, and

<sup>7</sup> Comp. x. 35.

*of* Samson, and *of* Jephthae; *of* David also, and Samuel, and *of* the prophets :

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight armies of aliens.

35 Women received their dead by means of resurrection : and others were tortured, not accepting the *offered* deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection :

36 And others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment :

37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword : they went about in sheepskins and goatskins ; being destitute, afflicted, evil entreated ;

38 (Of whom the world was not worthy,) wandering in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.

39 And these all, having obtained a good witness through faith, received not the promise :

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

## CHAPTER XII.

WHEREFORE seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and run with patience the race that is set before us.

2 Looking *off* unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto sons, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him :

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

7. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore we had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?



10 For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure ; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous : nevertheless afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees ;

13 “ And make straight paths for your feet,” that the lane be not turned out of the way ; but that it rather be healed.

14 Follow peace with all *men*, and the sanctification, without which no man shall see the Lord :

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God ; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby the many be defiled.

16 Lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one mess of meat sold his birth-right.

17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, (for he found no place for a change of purpose) though he sought it carefully with tears.

18 For ye have not drawn near unto a mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words ; which they that heard it intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more :

20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, “ And if so much as a beast touch the

mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart : ”

21 And so terrible was the appearance, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake : )

22 But ye have drawn near unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,

23 To the general assembly <sup>8</sup> and to the church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.<sup>9</sup>

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel.

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.<sup>1</sup> For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not* we *escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven :

26 Whose voice then shook the earth : but now he hath promised, saying, “ Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.”

27 And this *word*, “ Yet once more,” signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which are not shaken may remain.

28 Wherefore *as* receiving a kingdom not to be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may acceptably offer service to God with reverence and godly fear :

29 For our God also *is* “ a consuming fire.”

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>9</sup> I prefer the reading of the *Codex Sinaiticus*—“ And to the justified spirits of those who have finished their course,” *Kai πνεύμασι τελειων δεικταιωμένοις*, but it needs MS. confirmation.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. chap. i. ii. iii.

## CHAPTER XIII.

LET brotherly love continue.

2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

4 *Let* marriage be held honourable in all, and *let* the bed *be* undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

5 *Let your* conversation *be* without covetousness: content with such things as ye have: for He himself hath said, "I will never leave thee, no, nor ever forsake thee."

6 So that we may boldly say, "The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

7 Remember your leaders, who have spoken unto you the word of God: *and* carefully considering the issue of *their* mode of life, imitate their faith.

8 Jesus Christ yesterday and to-day the same, and *even* for ever.

9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

10 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek the one about to be.

15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name.

16 But to do good and to communicate forget not : for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

17 Obey your leaders, and submit yourselves : for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief : for that *is* unprofitable for you.

18 Pray for us : for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

19 But I beseech *you* the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep, with the blood of *an* everlasting covenant, *even* our Lord Jesus,

21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation : for I have written unto you compendiously.

23 Know ye that *our* brother Timothy is set at

liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.

24 Salute all your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy salute you.

25 Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

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Τίς δὲ ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν, το ἀληθὲς θεὸς διδεν.—  
*Origen, quoted by Alford.*



## NOTES ON THE HEBREWS.

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### INTRODUCTION.

WE look upon this epistle with the same reverence with which we regard other divinely inspired Scripture, and consequently desire to learn from its declarations, in a childlike spirit, all that it pleases our heavenly Father thus to impart to His children. We would not twist the line of thought imparted to us into some fancied accordance with other portions of Scripture in which (it may be) the truth is contemplated from a different point of view. "The wisdom given unto Paul"<sup>1</sup> was one thing, the testimony "to the true grace of God" given unto Peter was another;<sup>2</sup> the "witness bearing"<sup>3</sup> of John was again special, but all are Scripture: as the rays of light are capable of being looked at separately, as disclosing the primary colours, or conjointly as one gift of God, who said, "Let there be light, and there was light." If we wish to be instructed in the cardinal doctrine of justification by faith, or in the election of grace, we turn to the grand treatise on these subjects contained in the Epistle to the Romans. If we desire to understand the union of Christ and the church,—the mystery

<sup>1</sup> 2 Peter iii. 15.    <sup>2</sup> 1 Peter v. 12.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. i. 2; 1 John v.

specially imparted to the Apostle Paul, we must consult the Epistle to the Ephesians; but if we would be admitted to the rich stores of heavenly instruction conveyed through the types and shadows of the Mosaic institution, we must resort to the golden key given to us in the epistle, addressed in the first place to the Hebrew Christians, to those who were not involved in the apostacy of the nation, but were found believing to the saving of the soul.

Concerning these we learn that they were by adoption into the family of God holy brethren; not in any ordinary sense of relationship, but such as Christ is not ashamed to own as *His* brethren. For "both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of One," forming the family composed of children of God, foreseen in Isaiah as waiting upon the Lord during the period of His hiding His face from the house of Jacob. These consequently are the house of Christ, contradistinguished from the house of Moses, and those who, as responding to the voice of God speaking in these last days by His Son, are partakers of the heavenly calling. The Forerunner is for them entered within the veil, and they have in heaven a better and an enduring substance—partakers of chastening here, as being true-born sons of God, but though rejected and suffering loss on earth, having really come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. They are a people in covenant relationship to God, and that covenant sealed not by the blood of goats and of calves, but by the blood of Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; which is thus to them the blood of sprinkling in a higher and more glorious sense.



They have no continuing city here, neither altar, sacrifice, nor temple, but they seek a city yet to come, and a fatherland of God's own provision for them, a kingdom which cannot be shaken; to which belong an altar, a sacrifice, and priestly sustenance, reserved for their special use, and to which Aaron's followers can lay no claim.

They are made perfect for ever by this one sacrifice; and may go with confidence right up into the presence of God through the rent veil, and with full assurance of faith, having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water.

Finally, in order to meet their need in passing through the wilderness of this world towards their sabbath rest beyond, they have a great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, touched with the feeling of their infirmities; whilst Himself surrounded with all the glories of the higher creation, and of the more perfect tabernacle. Concerning this High Priest it is the *kephalaion*, or "the principal point," of the writer's address to instruct them, knowing that through this untransferable priesthood He is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God through Him.

To such persons and with such objects was this epistle addressed; and therefore we might have supposed it superfluous to insist upon the self-evident truth that it is written to *Christians*. If such persons are to be looked upon as still Jews, it must be in the sense of their being the Jezreel or "seed of God," to whom in Christ the promises belong—the true Israel of God.

As regards the mode in which the instruction is conveyed, there appears to be a complete contrast between the Pauline epistles and the one under consideration. We do not allude to the manifest difference of style, but to that which penetrates much deeper, even the very basis and foundation of the instruction itself. This is (in all cases) in the Hebrews the Old Testament. We find no such declarations as "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord," implying a special revelation of some new and peculiar truth. The very opening of the epistle is indeed a most full and glorious declaration of *the* truth on which all other truth rests, but then it is truth common to the whole Church of God, and on which indeed the very existence of the Church depends. It is brought before us with the full dignity and majesty of inspiration, but still confirmed by a careful appeal to the Old Testament Scriptures. There is no attempt to veil from the unbelieving nation, or in any way to disguise the truth of the divine character and mission of the Son of God, although this was the very *gravamen* of their charge against Him. "We have a law, and by this law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God."

#### CHRIST, THE WORD OF LIFE.

The first verse, opening the epistle, is full of instruction. It tells us that it is not the manner of our God to unveil His glory, and to make manifest His secrets under all circumstances and at all times. It is rather a special privilege reserved for few, and tending to produce that result on which His mind is fully set, even the glory of His beloved Son. The

second verse shews us that this revelation in these latter days is in and by His Son. This is most important, for though in a subordinate sense, we do well in honouring the Scriptures as the word of God, yet there is ever a certain tendency in some minds to bibliolatry or worship of the Scriptures; as if they were other than a *means* to an *end*. Truly that end is a most gracious one, "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name." We shall never through eternity exhaust the contemplation of His beauty, who is the *effulgence* of the Father's glory, the ἀπαύγασμα, the full radiance of the ineffable light, penetrating into this dark world of ours, and enabling us to say that the need of our souls is thus fully met. For we want to know God, and to repose ourselves in Him, and then and then only are we satisfied. All His attributes shine forth in Jesus, and all are sweetly tempered to our feeble sense:

"The Son of God in radiance beamed,  
Too bright for us to scan;  
But we may face the rays that streamed  
From the mild Son of man.

"There, parted into rainbow hues,  
In sweet harmonious strife,  
We see celestial love diffuse  
Its light o'er Jesus' life."

There is an *antithesis* running throughout Scripture between *darkness* and *death*, and *light* and *life*. The Son of God is spoken of in John's Gospel (i. 9) as the TRUE LIGHT, corresponding to the place which the sun occupies in the works of God in creation, as described in the first chapter of Genesis: On

the very first day God said, "Let there be light, and there was light," but on the fourth day God made "*the greater Light*," or light-bearer, "to rule the day." So God had manifested Himself "in manifold portions and in divers manners" to the old world. God was evermore *light*, and with Him is the fountain of life. "In Him was life, and the life was the *light* of men," but the receptive faculty in man was wanting. "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." It does not drink in the Light, nor take it up so as to be of one substance with itself. For this is the property of light, that when received by the living plant, it fructifies and energizes that life; but falling on a dead mass it but aids and stimulates its corruption. All the beautiful verdure of the earth and all its varied products derive their vigour from the rays of the sun, which, proceeding from that wondrous source, return not thither, but give occasion to the precious things brought forth thereby. So that there can be no division in the works of God between *light*, *life*, and *fruitfulness*. Light and warmth flow together along with their associated powers; and fruit to the praise of the Giver of all good is the result.

But all this presupposes *life* as the receptive condition, for God has from the beginning divided the light from the darkness, and it is only where there is light that there is life—only where there is life that light becomes the source of fruitfulness. So, in order that the light should not fall as on a barren rock, it was needful that the WORD should be made flesh, and dwell among us as the WORD of LIFE,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> 1 John i. 1.

and that He should be manifested in such sort that as many as received Him should become the sons of God. The word of Scripture here comes in to fulfil its part in the kingdom of light, for "these things are *written*, that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing we might have life through His name."

As living ones, we then drink in the rays of the great Sun of righteousness, and not only grow thereby, but flourish and bear fruit whilst we abide *in the light*. Thus in Eph. v. we are exhorted thus: "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: for *the fruit of the light*<sup>5</sup> is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.

Darkness has its fruits in the moral world, against which we are warned, even the "unfruitful works of darkness" (as, in the absence of light, all foul and evil things are engendered by corruption), the unserviceable fruits of that kingdom of darkness which has no power to receive the light.

In the same chapter in John we are instructed that all natural means fail to give this receptive faculty of life. The sons of God are "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Christ came unto His own inheritance (*τὰ ἴδια*), and His own people (*οἱ ἱδιοὶ*) did not receive Him. Just as the darkness of the old world did not *drink* in the fructifying light (*οὐ κατελαβεν*), so the chosen nation did not *receive*<sup>6</sup> as

<sup>5</sup> See Alford, *in loco*; so in S.V.A. Tischendorf.

<sup>6</sup> A word expressing *the personal assumption to oneself as a friend or companion*. See Alford and Greek Dict.

their Messiah and King (οὐ παρελάβον) the life that was the light of men.

#### CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD.

The whole constitution of nature would appear to be defective and without purpose apart from the incarnation of the Son of God. The visible creation, or mighty *Cosmos*, in its *Pleroma*, or fulness towards which all being irresistibly tends, proclaims the exuberant bounty of a Creator having the design to manifest and glorify *Himself* in this outpouring of his treasures. We do not think that any right-minded person could search into these His works in any direction without perceiving that they were intended to be (in measure at least) understood, or in Scripture language "sought out" of all those that have pleasure therein; and so far appreciated that the student should derive therefrom certain knowledge of the eternal power and Godhead of the Maker and Founder of all. It was necessary that the crowning point of creation, the highest portion of the moulded dust of the world, should be an intelligent creature; capable of taking up the incense of praise arising from the wonderful and beautiful world around him, and of expressing this in *worship*. This is exactly what is told us in reference to the position of Adam. He is formed king over this lower world and priest to God. He alone has any knowledge of a superior Being, and he alone can worship, whilst himself receiving homage from all the subordinate creatures. There is not a single portion of God's works, as far as our knowledge extends, that is not allied through intermediate links to every other portion of the great

whole. Nothing stands absolutely alone. In many resemblances we seem to have this truth almost obtruded on our view, for the typical plan comes before us in striking analogies stamped even upon the framework of man, as he is curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth: so that he is compelled to feel his relationship with the very worm on which he treads, and may if he chuses, so far obliterate from his mind the knowledge of his high original and special place in God's creation, as to seek to persuade himself that he is in very deed no better than the beasts which perish.

But if all creation be one, and man the *microcosm* or miniature world, created free to render the willing homage of the heart to Him to whom it is due; must he not also be created free to turn aside, free to withhold this homage, free to constitute *himself* rather than God, the centre of his own regard. All is in unison up to man; but how is it certain that man will continue in unison with God. Here comes in the need of the incarnation—that God should take this wondrous nature into such everlasting union, and intimate association with Himself, that all should not only be *one*, but *one in God*. This the First-born and only begotten Son came forth to effect in His own Person<sup>7</sup> for all the chosen race and to the glory of His Father.

<sup>7</sup> He is the express image of the *Person* of the Father. We have not thought it desirable to alter the translation of the word *hypostasis*, since the word *person* has acquired by its very use in this connection the meaning which is to be desired. It is an illustration of the impossibility of always rendering the word of the original by the same word in English, seeing that in the three cases in which *hypostasis* is used in this epistle it has in each

## CHRIST, THE SON OF MAN.

Man was created to have dominion over this visible world. He was to be its evident and manifest king, ruling in the fear of God. This position he lost through the fall, but not for ever, seeing that this place of glory and of dignity is reserved for the God-man in whom all shall be fulfilled in its season. It was necessary that the Christ should be *man*, since by man must come the resurrection; it was essential that He should *die*, that by death He might overcome him that had the power of death. How pernicious then are all those theories which seem to make His death other than a reality! He was delivered by the determinate counsel of God, but by wicked hands was crucified and SLAIN. It is well to notice the incidental testimony borne to His previous existence, and consequently to His Godhead; for the nature that “took on” another nature, must of necessity be all this. No *created* being can raise itself above the conditions of its creation.<sup>8</sup>

In the first chapter we are instructed concerning a different meaning; and, moreover, the word *substance* in chapter xi., which is exactly the same in Latin as *hypostasis* in Greek, has come to be applied in so materialistic a sense that its application would be revolting to the Christian mind in the passage under consideration.

<sup>8</sup> The reader will notice in chapter ii. 5 the expression *habitable world*, which is the only way of conveying the explanation that *οικουμένη* (from *οικος*, a house; *οικεομαι*, to inhabit), cannot possibly mean heaven, but must refer to a state yet future of this present world, at the time when Christ shall have claimed it for His own inheritance. The reader will thus we think be enabled to get more easily into the thoughts concerning the real humanity of Christ that pervade this chapter.



the glory of the Son of God, and this contrasted with the angels, who are all created ministering spirits. In the second chapter we learn how this is connected with the glory predestined for the many sons, apparently intended to take the place of rule, at present delegated to the angels. "Know ye not (says Paul) that we shall judge angels?" The people of God are not called *sons* in the Old Testament. The *adoption* was then *national*. Previously to the flood we read of certain "sons of God," whoever these might be; but they soon fell from their first principality, they left their own habitation, and are reserved in Tartarus in everlasting chains under darkness<sup>9</sup> unto the judgment of the great day.

God has nevertheless a family predestined to be *conformed to the image of His Son*, and to this the somewhat singular and remarkable expression in the opening of the epistle might seem to refer; (*ἐν υἱῷ*) which we cannot translate better than "by His Son," seems to imply rather that God hath spoken to us by that Son, who is to be the First-born among many brethren, and that so all are to be *sons*.

These are to be of Adam's race, and yet sons of God; so that here is a difficulty, since those who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead cannot die any more, being *ἰσάγγελοι*, 'equal unto the angels.' It is only so that God can fully acknowledge them as His children. They are *the children of God*, being "THE CHILDREN OF THE RESURRECTION."

The prophetic announcement quoted in the 12th verse of this chapter from Psalm xxii. directly refers

<sup>9</sup> Vide the Greek text.

to the accomplishment of that work of redemption, by virtue of which the Kinsman-Redeemer could in the gladness of His heart send the wonderful message by Mary, as the first result of His death and resurrection: "Go tell my brethren I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God." The eternal and unfading joy of Him who alone "possesses immortality"<sup>1</sup> was doubtless refreshing His soul whilst thus declaring that the glory given to Him was already in principle shared with and communicated to the happy sons of God, united now with Himself in resurrection life.

This clearing up of the difficulty seems to be the central point, the very keystone, as it were, of Psalm xxii., which is written concerning "the hind of the morning"—that is to say, the first beams of light; compared to the tapering horns of the antelope when the sun rises in an eastern clime. So after the dark night of the cross the divine promise calls forth from the beloved One the response in resurrection "for Thou hast heard me;" and we know what the request was, "He asked *life* of Thee," and the answer, "Thou gavest it Him, even *length of days for ever and ever*." How great must have been the joy of the heart of Jesus in having the greater joy of sharing this gift with all the family of God, for He Himself has said, "that it is more blessed to give than to receive."

We have truths in this chapter presented to us in the following order, viz.—1st. The original purpose of the creation of Adam, that of dominion over the earth. 2nd. This dominion having now disappeared, or at least that we see not yet all things put under

<sup>1</sup> Ὁ μόνος ἔχων ἀθανασία.

him. 3rd. The believer sees this all in Jesus, the Second Adam, to whom in title all belongs. 4th. The family of God are to be brought to share the dominion when He bringeth again the First-begotten into the world. In the midst of the congregation of the living ones He, the Prince of Life, will sing praise unto the living One, who is, and was, and who is to come. In the midst of the throne, and of the four living ones, and in the midst of the elders, will be seen a Lamb *as it had been* slain. But death, the last enemy, has been triumphed over, so that instead of the family being all their lifetime subject to bondage through fear of death, they look upon death as swallowed up in victory, "and they sing a *new* song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for *Thou wast slain*, and hast redeemed us to God by *thy blood* out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." In the full song of triumph with which chapter iv. in Revelation closes we find the whole world brought into blessing as the fruit of redemption.

#### CHRIST THE APOSTLE OF OUR PROFESSION.

We are to consider the apostle of our profession, that is to say, the one sent *from* in order to bring us *to* the bosom of the Father. It is thus that we are partakers of a heavenly calling.<sup>2</sup> We connect this 'heavenly calling' very distinctly with the declaration that God hath spoken to us by His Son in these last days. This Apostle, Jesus the Christ, is contrasted with Moses, the faithful servant, by whom

<sup>2</sup> It is doubtful whether we ought to translate *the* heavenly calling, for this is not warranted by the original.

the people were led out of Egypt, and the economy of the old dispensation arranged. But the glory belonging to "this man" is that of the One by whom all things were made, and therefore the house over which Christ is set is *His own* house, over which He rules in the dignity of the Son of God. The tone of exhortation in this chapter is very different from that adopted by the Apostle Paul. We are considered to be this house of Christ "*if* we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." It is evidently supposed that if exhortation be neglected some of the brethren will be in real danger of apostatizing from the faith, and they are told to hold fast the beginning of their confidence to the end, and thus to be made partakers of Christ. He must be a bold man who in looking upon the church of God would say that such exhortation is inapplicable now, and he must be a man more confident than wise who, in regarding the state of some congregations continually fed upon high doctrine without practical exhortation, would willingly pretermit the strong cautions addressed to the Hebrew believers.

Let us therefore *fear*, says the writer, lest any of us *seem* to come short of the rest. This leads on to the consideration of the rest itself and of the value of Christ's high priestly intercession on our way to the rest. It is understood that God, from the foundation of the world has appointed a rest (σαββατισμος) a *sabbatism*, into which he will bring some, even those who according to his determinate counsel are to enter thereon. But who shall these favoured ones be? First the glad tidings were proclaimed to Israel, but owing to their unbelief their bones

whitened in the sands of the wilderness, the tremendous IF thus cutting off those who would not trust God. Shall it be so with the believer? No! for we which have believed *do enter* into rest. He that has entered into His rest (and who can this be but the Captain of salvation?) he also hath ceased from his works, as God did from His own. God was able to look back upon all His seven days' works and to see that they were good, even so Jesus looks back upon a finished work—a complete purification from sin, into the enjoyment of the benefits of which one sacrifice we enter through believing. We are consequently to look upon this eternal sabbatism as especially God's rest in His people in *love*, as the prophet says concerning Jerusalem, "He will save; he will *rest in his love*; he will joy over thee with singing." The first rest of God in His works in creation, when He pronounced them all good, was broken up by sin, but this coming rest shall be eternal; for "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God *Himself* shall be with them and be *their* God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for *the former things are passed away*." Man thus enters into the Sabbath-rest of God. Let us then give diligence lest unbelief, which shut out unbelieving Israel from Canaan, rob us of the yet greater blessing of the everlasting rest.

In the exhortation with which this fourth chapter concludes, we have a manifest parallel to the glorious conclusion in Romans viii. 34, 35. It is Christ that

died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, *who also maketh intercession for us.* Who shall *separate us* from the love of Christ? Is it not here also the *intercession* of Christ which guards against our separation from Him, and secures the result of the heavenly calling. We are exhorted to hold fast our profession on this ground, that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, and one of no less dignity than this,—JESUS, THE SON OF GOD. He is an high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. This gracious declaration exactly meets the need of poor tempted pilgrims who can thus come unto Him and tell Him all their inmost sorrows and trials, even such as they cannot communicate to their fellow-creatures. They can pour all these into the sympathising ear of Jesus, because they know that He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. We are exhorted therefore to come boldly to the *throne of grace.* Now, what is this throne of grace but a direct reference to the *mercy-seat*, which was the throne occupied by Jehovah amongst His people when He took them by the hand to lead them through the wilderness into the promised rest; for we read that “when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with God, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him *from off the mercy-seat* that was upon the ark of testimony from between the two cherubims.” So that our specially familiar language in reference to prayer derives its primary foundation from the much-neglected types ordained by the Holy Ghost in the old dispensation.

## CHRIST THE HIGH PRIEST.

The next chapter (the fifth) enters upon the subject of priesthood, which we shall now consider; remarking, in the first place, that the High Priest was such for Israel alone, and had no sort of relationship to the nations. The institution was part of the settled and organized provision made for Israel as the chosen nation, and as such part of what is called THE ADOPTION. (Rom. ix. 4.) It was the appointed means through which the family of God, as then constituted, had access to Him as to their Father; and yet it was not until this nation had been called as a son out of Egypt that this privilege could be accorded. It was then, as led out from the land of bondage, that they could be instructed in the SERVICE OF GOD to which they were so specially called,<sup>3</sup> and of this service of God the ministrations of the High Priest were, as we have seen, especially the centre; the law with its shadows of good things to come all clustering around the mercy-seat, and bearing in all its branches reference to the sprinkled blood, through which alone it could become, even typically, the *service* to be accomplished by a sinful people.

The application of this to the new dispensation seems both clear and important. In the first place it establishes a difference between *priesthood* and *mediation*. It is clear that the office of Christ as *High Priest* belongs only to His elect people, whilst in contemplating the *Mediator* we are led into a

<sup>3</sup> "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." (Hosea xi. 1.) This in its application to Israel is the earthly calling of the nation.

wider range; for we read, "There is one mediator between *God* and *man*—the man Christ Jesus." In this sense the word seems to be equivalent to the assurance that He is "*the Saviour of all men*," though specially of those that believe. We shall return to this presently.

In the next place we observe that all the exercise of this high priestly function is connected with the sprinkled blood, "that speaketh better things than that of Abel." "For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer;"<sup>4</sup> and therefore "through the eternal Spirit He offered *Himself* without spot to God."<sup>5</sup>

This would appear to have been the first great work of His high priesthood; to which the prayer in John xvii., often called the High Priest's Prayer, was solemnly introductory,—entering in spirit into that immediately before Him.

It is then the relationship of Christ to an *already redeemed and reconciled people* that we now proceed to consider, as those who, being (spiritually) already brought out of Egypt and through the Red Sea, are on their way to the Canaan rest. For the sake of convenience, we will arrange our observations under the following heads:—

1. The person of the High Priest.
2. His service
  - (*a*) As fulfilling the Aaronic type.
  - (*β*) As priest after the order of Melchizedek.

<sup>4</sup> Heb viii. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. ix. 14. See also John xvii. 4; xix. 4, 41; Isa. liii. 9; Rom. i. 4.



3. The place of His service.

4. The people whom He serves.

5. Difference between mediation and priesthood.

1. Everything depends in the new dispensation on the person of the High Priest—in this as in everything else; the *real* taking the place of the merely *typical*. Aaron does not seem to have had any special personal qualification for the office. His being able to speak well qualified him, indeed, to assist Moses when the latter broke down under the sense of the responsibility and difficulty of arousing the people; but when the directions come for setting him apart as high priest, it is not his eloquence that comes before us, but another thing altogether, even his *garments*.<sup>6</sup> To a great extent it is the garments that make the priest, since all is ritualistic in the appointment. The after-mentioned washing with water did not make him into a better man, though it made him externally clean, in order that he might be arrayed in the garments; and as to his selection, it seems to have been simply as the brother of Moses that he was called to fill up the gap occasioned by the reluctance of the latter. In this way the type was rendered more perfect, and that in accordance with the character of the dispensation.

Now in Christ all this is completely otherwise, and *how much* otherwise our feeble pen cannot express. The very type seems to labour under the inability to display His compassions, and to become more than a type for the purpose. For the high priest chosen from among men must be a man who could have compassion, being taught pity by his own

<sup>6</sup> Exodus xxviii.

infirmity; but as regards the blessed One whom we own as our High Priest (being called of God by resurrection thereunto), the things spoken in chap. iv. are so deep and so mysterious, that, whilst they give rest to our hearts in the contemplation, they exceed the grasp of the powers of our minds. What lessons does not the scene in Gethsemane, where He was heard for His piety, teach to those who are the followers of this Captain of salvation! We again say, He was made *personally* perfect, and that in the way most suited to win our confidence and to encourage our trust in Him; for we have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

2. His service. This is expressly declared to be the service of a priest after the order of Melchisedek, and yet this does not exclude his fulfilling typically that service which was from age to age carried forward by earthly priests after the order of Aaron until He came. We must look at this a little more closely.

(a) The very object of His appearance was to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and this He did completely. He offered one sacrifice for sins—a sacrifice of such eternal excellency that those who have an interest in it are thereby perfected for ever. He came from the bosom of the Father, saying, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,” thus to take away all the continually recurring offerings of the Levitical priesthood. There is no room now for the *mass* as a continually repeated offering; any more than there is for those who call themselves priests, usurping a

function long since extinct, and to which no title can be shewn. All is heavenly in its character, and all proceeds upon the ground of grace as having reference to sinners already saved; so that there is no need to repeat the sacrifice<sup>7</sup> either for the living or for the dead. Every priest *standeth* daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but this man offered one sacrifice, and then *sat down* at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

But if He were on earth He should not be a priest, as He would then have interfered with the functions of the family of Aaron. It was when separated from earth, as adjudged by man not fit to live, and hung upon the accursed tree between earth and heaven, that through the eternal Spirit He offered up Himself. He exclaimed, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit"<sup>8</sup> (παραθήσομαι τὸ πνεῦμά μου): "and He gave up the ghost." (αφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα, Matt. xxvii. 50; παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, John xix. 30.)

(β) All is thenceforward for blessing. He has done with sin; for, in that He died, it is concerning sin that He died *once*, but in that He liveth, it is to God that He liveth. He has now an unchangeable priesthood, and is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession<sup>9</sup> for them. All that He does now partakes of the Melchisedek character of blessing. So we read—"The blood of Jesus Christ His

<sup>7</sup> Heb. ix. 26.

<sup>8</sup> Luke xxiii. 46.

<sup>9</sup> The word here translated *to make intercession* (εντυγχανειν) is a *choice one*, avoiding the idea of offering sacrifice on the one hand, or of actual vocal prayer on the other.

Son *cleanseth* us from all sin;" and again—"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." There is thus a daily and continual ministration of cleansing and healing, bearing not so much on the personal standing in grace of the believer,—for this rests on the *finished* work,—but the other on the present intercession; an intercession no doubt intimately connected with that which is carried on in the hearts of the saints by the Holy Spirit, for *He* maketh intercession for them with groanings that cannot be uttered. Here is a rich field for meditative thought.

### 3. The place of service of the High Priest.

This is "heaven itself,"<sup>1</sup> "the Holiest,"<sup>2</sup> "the right hand of God,"<sup>3</sup> "of the Majesty on high," (*ἐν ὑψηλοῖς*, or in the heavens),<sup>4</sup> and consequently "within the veil,"<sup>5</sup> where Christ, as the forerunner, has entered for us. It is the secret place of "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man;"<sup>6</sup> "of the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, *not of this creation*."<sup>7</sup>

Since the things within the veil are thus not of this visible and tangible creation, we can only apprehend them by faith. The holiest of all (in the pattern set up in the wilderness) received no light from

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ix. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. x. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. viii. 1.

<sup>4</sup> The reader will note the expression "the Majesty on high" as peculiar to this epistle, and as opening out in a very grand manner the theme of instruction which contemplates redemption as emanating from the Father, and brought down to us by the Son in accordance with the councils of eternal wisdom.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. vi. 19.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. viii. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Heb. ix. 11.

the sun, neither was it capable of being illuminated by the seven-branched candlestick in the holy place, since *the veil* was interposed. It was the awful and mysterious Shekinah, the presence of Him who dwelleth<sup>8</sup> in the inaccessible light (*φῶς ἀπρόσιτον*) revealed upon the mercy-seat, the throne of grace, where the sprinkled blood of atonement made it possible for Jehovah to dwell amongst His people. So we read of the heavenly city that it had "no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." "The throne of God *and of the Lamb* shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall *see His face*; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they *need no candle, neither light of the sun*; for *the Lord God giveth them light*: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

Now, that which hinders all our approach to these "heavenly things" in any other way than by faith is *the veil*,<sup>9</sup> which will, therefore, next require our consideration.

### *The Veil.*

(a) The first thought connected with the veil is that of *concealment*; and this takes us back to the commencement of the history of our sinful race; for when Jehovah-Elohim drove out the man from Eden, He also placed at the east of the garden of Eden [the] cherubims and a [the] flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>8</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Heb. ix. 32.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxv. 7. It would seem as though something known and special were spoken of, and not impossibly tradition might supply

The connection between the cherubim and the veil we shall see presently.

Since that time the covering has been cast over all people, and the veil has been spread over all nations,<sup>2</sup> and access to the invisible has been jealously denied to man; so that only by prohibited arts and means of unhallowed intercourse has he been able to overpass the bounds which separate him from the inhabitants of Hades. The sword of death, which bars the way to the tree of life, could only lose its power to destroy when called upon to awake against the man that was Jehovah's fellow—the Shepherd from the bosom of the living One, who in that “mountain of the Lord”<sup>3</sup> destroyed death by dying, and delivered those who by reason of the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

So when the patterns of things in the heavens were to be set up in the wilderness, the original exclusion of man from the presence of God was to be brought to remembrance, and Moses made, according to the direction of the Lord, “a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen: with cherubims made he it of cunning work.”<sup>4</sup>

(b) We will now consider more particularly the composition of the veil, and its reference to the typical meaning. In the first place then we may remark that, whilst serving the purpose of concealing, it was also intended in a partial and, if we may

this definiteness in the early day when Genesis was written. Mr. Alex. Henderson, the compiler of the “Maia Dictionary,” writes, in lit. in 1865, respecting a tradition existing in central America, of a *flame* as marking “the gate of extraction” of the first man.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xxv. 7, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Zech. xiii. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Exodus xxxvi. 36; xxvi. 31.

so say, *cover*t sense to reveal somewhat of that which was within. There were golden cherubim *within*, on which the priest in his ordinary ministrations might not look; but he *might* behold on the veil the embroidered cherubim. So in the revealed application to the flesh of Christ we see that it hindered the gaze of all but the eye of faith from penetrating into the hidden glory of His person; and yet, doubtless, though there was "no beauty" to the carnal eye, there must have been in that blessed visage, which was more marred than any man, the most perfect lineaments of spiritual beauty indicating that which was within.

Concerning the special meaning involved in the different colours and in the "cunning work" of the veil we have no certain information; and though we are tempted to conceive that the very framework of the universe might be intended, ordered as it no doubt is by the wondrous Artificer to reveal in measure that which to the careless eye it conceals, yet on fuller reflection we turn from this to the application on which we have already dwelt; viz., to the flesh of Christ.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> By the words "cunning work" and "curiously wrought" work we may understand *embroidery*, wrought patiently by hand, chiefly of the women; and how richly and magnificently done we may understand by existing specimens of eastern embroidery. The purple and scarlet remind of the colour of venous and arterial blood, being as regards their origin probably from the same source. The celebrated Tyrian dye from a shell-fish found on the coast required to be perfected by many times' immersion in different baths; hence called *Dibaphon*, so Ovid, "*nec quæ bis Tyrio murice lana rubet*" (in Isaiah i., "though my sins be as scarlet" is equivalent to *double dyed*), and the colour was *purple* by reflected and scarlet by transmitted light. The garment of mock royalty

(c) The rending of the veil.

We read in Matthew that "Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." We have thus presented the clear application of the curiously-wrought fabric to the body which was prepared, in which He might do that will of the Father which He came to accomplish. So in the Psalms we read, "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought (or *embroidered*) in the lowest parts of the earth."<sup>a</sup> So the spirit was commended into the hands of the Father, and the body was a rent veil. All the wondrous fabric was torn asunder by the rude hands of man, and that connection between the heavenly and the earthly broken which was established when the virgin conceived and bore a Son whose name should be called Immanuel, or God with us. The veil was rent,

in which Christ was arrayed is called purple (*πορφύρα*) by Mark and scarlet (*κκκίπος*) by Matthew, and the imperial robe of the false woman in Revelation is called both purple and scarlet. "Of the tints in which blue predominated the amethyst was the most esteemed; next to the amethyst the heliotrope, the mallow, and the autumnal violet. The colour most highly prized was a dark rich purple of the colour of *coagulated blood*, but when held against the light shewing a crimson hue." — *Kenrick's Phenicia*, p. 242. "תכלת blue, in our version denotes *perfection*, and therefore refers rather to the completeness of the process than either the colour or material of the dye." — *Ibid.* p. 238.

Arabia furnished a vegetable dye resembling the Syrian purple. Indigo, henna, and madder were known to the Egyptians. They were most skilful dyers.

<sup>a</sup> Psalm cxxxix. 14.



and all intercourse between God and the creature was at an end. Man's trial had closed at the cross. He had rejected the Son of God, whose spirit was now with the Father, and His body about to be consigned to the tomb. Then began to be unfolded the deeper mystery of God's love to man, and the mode in which it should be manifested—no longer by His walking with Adam in Paradise, nor yet by giving the august mystery of His presence to Israel in leading them by the fiery, cloudy pillar in the wilderness, or walking with them in a tabernacle or in a tent; nor even yet in that wondrous "temple of His body" which we have just seen "destroyed" by the hand of man; but when *man* in the person of a risen Christ should be raised up to sit at the right hand of God, and the great company of those chosen by grace from earth should be made one with the risen Saviour, being raised up together and seated together in the heavenlies with Him.

4. "The people whom he serves," next claim our attention.

We have seen that these are identified in Scripture with the death and resurrection of Christ, and are consequently looked upon as a dead and risen people. This is representatively shewn (or at least was so in the beginning) by their baptism, since they are described as buried with Him by baptism into death, and raised up to *newness* of life. The waves of death have consequently passed over everything that is earthly in their position, and their life and walk and service are connected with the heavenlies. All is in absolute contrast with Judaism. The promised rest is not an earthly Canaan, but heaven. The city of

their solemnities to which they are already *come* is the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. Neither the earthly Jerusalem, nor Antioch, nor Rome, can now afford any centre for their organization; for this is also heavenly, clustering around Christ as its centre, wherever He manifests His presence; for where two or three meet together in His name, there He has promised to be in the midst.

The temple in which ministers, in an untransferable service, their High Priest—glorious not in His dress, but in the transcendent perfection of His glorified person—is not of this creation. The altar is that of which “they have no right to eat that serve the tabernacle.” The sacrifice has been once offered for perpetuity. The officiating priests and white stoled Levites of the new order, “offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of their lips, giving thanks to His name.” Moreover they are enjoined not to forget to do good and to communicate, knowing that with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

There was no danger in those early days, that the Christians should suppose that their places of assembly were temples, that any class amongst themselves were priests, or that their remembrance of the dying of their Lord was really a sacrifice for the living and for the dead. To them the earthly sanctuaries, altars, and ministering priests were *realities* marking an abolished dispensation, to turn back to which was apostasy from Christianity.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> “If there be any who have confessed and acknowledge Him to be the Christ, and shall from any cause whatsoever return back again to the law of Moses, and deny that He is the Christ, and

Moreover as the priesthood is changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law, so that Christians are **not** under the law, but under grace,<sup>8</sup> but not without law (*ανομος*) to God, but loyal (*ευνομος*) to Christ. It is remarkable that this truth should have been so much obscured, and it is worthy of notice that the text quoted as revised by Tischendorf reads thus: "And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews, to them that are under the law as under the law, *not being myself under the law.*"<sup>9</sup> This paragraph has by some means been omitted from the text of all but the earlier manuscripts.<sup>1</sup>

Such then are the people for whom Christ ministers.

5. Difference between mediation and priesthood. We read that there is one God, and one Mediator between *God* and *men*, the *man* Christ Jesus. A mediator is one who steps in between parties at variance, and seeks to reconcile their differences. So in the epistle to the Galatians, the apostle argues that a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. God was not one with the people, who being the seed of Abraham and inheritors of the promises had yet fallen away so foully as to have made them gods of gold. Under these circumstances Moses says, "Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin."<sup>2</sup> He then goes up to the Lord, and on the strength of his own personal acceptance

shall not repent thereof before they die, I affirm that they cannot possibly be saved."—*Justin Martyr, Dialogue, &c.*, section xlvii.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. vi. 14.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 20.

<sup>1</sup> Viz., the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Alexandrine, which all contain the addition.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xxxii. 32.

pleads their cause. He confesses the sin of the people, and says, "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin - ; and if not, blot *me*, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written." He rises very high in this Christ-like act of self-renunciation ; but great as was his favour in the heavenly court, he could not prevail beyond a certain point. "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book," is the Lord's answer. The fruit of his mediation appears to be that he is again commissioned to lead on the people towards the promised land - that the Lord's angel (or messenger) is promised to go before him ; and, though with threatened chastening, there is the establishment immediately following of that order of things, on the ground of which the Lord could walk as in a tabernacle in the midst of this stiffnecked people.

An essential part of this service was the high priesthood - all established on the basis of mediation, but the high priesthood established nothing. The high priest was part of a system already established. So at a subsequent period<sup>a</sup> when the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram had called down judgment from the Lord, and still further was yet impending, Moses does not again throw himself personally between the sinning people and their offended Lord ; but he *says* to Aaron, "Take a censer, and put *fire* therein from off *the altar*, and put on *incense*, and go quickly unto the congregation and make *an atonement* for them, for there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun."

Clearly there is not here any question of Aaron's

<sup>a</sup> Numbers xvi.

character, or of his personal acceptance. All depends on the system which God Himself had established. All in fact was *RITUAL*, *censer*, *altar*, *incense*, being powerful though mute reminders to God of that *goodness*, on the ground of which He had consented to dwell as propitiated by the sprinkled blood amidst a camp of sinners. This is *high priesthood*.

In the death of Christ we behold both mediation and priesthood. *Mediation*, because His personal acceptance with God was brought into question, if we may so speak, when He became a curse for us. It seemed as though neither God nor man would have anything to say to Him: He was compelled to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" He was judicially condemned by man, and accounted not fit to live. He was even condemned to an accursed death, since it had been written in the law of God, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." So by the united judgment of Jew and Gentile was He lifted up between earth and heaven, as disowned by the one, and not accepted by the other, whilst the sun veiled his face from the scene.

*Priesthood*, in fulfilment of the Aaronic type, is also most evident, as explained to us in the word that, through the eternal Spirit, He offered (*προσήνεγκεν*, the *priestly* word) Himself without spot to God: He *gave Himself* for us an *offering* (*προσφορὰν*) and a *sacrifice* (*θυσίαν*) to God for a *sweet-smelling savour*. Compare the directions in Leviticus and the word, "The *priest* shall burn all on the altar, a *burnt-sacrifice*, an *offering* made by fire, of a *sweet savour unto the Lord*."<sup>4</sup> Exactly the same words are used in

<sup>4</sup> Lev. i. 9.

the Septuagint in reference to the sacrifice of Noah, accompanied by the declaration, "I will not *again* curse, neither will I *again* smite." It was a *savour of rest*, (as the Hebrew has it,) completing the atonement. So, in reference to this offering (*προσφορά*), we read that by one offering He hath *perfected for ever* them that are sanctified.

#### CHRIST FULFILLS AND TAKES AWAY SACRIFICE.

We must, therefore, look a little more closely into the sacrifices in the order they are presented to us in chap. x. 8.

(α) Sacrifice—*θυσία*.

(β) Offering—*προσφορά*.

(γ) Burnt-offering—*ὁλοκαυστόμα*.

(δ) For sin—*περὶ ἁμαρτίας*.

Since all these sacrifices are fulfilled in and by Him who took away the first that He might establish His own offering, we may rightly expect to trace out special instruction concerning the work of Christ from each.

(α) Sacrifice—*θυσία*.

The primary idea in the verb *חָבַד* is that of slaughtering an animal.<sup>5</sup> It is *not ordinarily used of priests slaying victims* but of individuals,<sup>6</sup> e.g., Jacob, or Jethro, or the nation of Israel, or Solomon, or Samuel, or even Balak, who brought sacrifices at their own charge. It is opposed to a bloodless offering, and is *specially* used respecting killing the Passover.<sup>7</sup> It is constantly used as connected with

<sup>5</sup> Gen. Lex. in loco., and see the noun as used in Psalm xl. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Gen. xxxi. 54; xlv. 1; 1 Kings viii. 63; Ex. viii. 27, 29; Deut. xii. 21; xxvii. 6; Lev. xvii. 5; Lev. ix. 4; Num. xxii. 40.

<sup>7</sup> Deut. xvi. 2.

peace; thus, "The *sacrifice* of His peace-offerings;"<sup>8</sup> and it was understood that Jehovah was honoured and filled with the fat of these; that thus the worshippers should be made joyful in the acceptance of their sacrifice,<sup>9</sup> which was "sweet unto the Lord." If all was in order, the flesh of the sacrifices was accepted, and *imputed* or reckoned זָכַב to the worshipper. This reminds of Romans iv.

In turning to the New Testament application of these things we notice—

1. The slaughter of the victim. The special use of the word (*θυσία*) is in reference to Christ putting away sin by the *sacrifice* of Himself.<sup>1</sup> This was the *one* sacrifice, never to be repeated, after having offered which He *sat down* at the right hand of God. He has touched sin once, put it away, and has no more to do with it, in this sense, *for ever*. "For in that He died, it is to sin that He died once: but in that He liveth, it is to God that He liveth."

2. We observe that even as the whole assembly of the children of Israel slaughtered the lamb in the evening, so have they by wicked hands crucified and slain their Saviour. "Jesus of Nazareth" did not slay Himself; He *was slain* by the people. The slaying of the victims was not necessarily the work of the priest or even of the offerer. That which He did as priest was *offering* up the sacrifice to God.

3. In the next place we notice that the effect of this sacrifice is an abiding state of peace and reconciliation. Thus in Heb. vii., when the high priest had offered up *sacrifice* for his own sins, he was

<sup>8</sup> Isa. xliii. 23, 24.

<sup>9</sup> Isa. lv. 7; lvi. 7; Jer. vi. 23.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ix. x.

understood to be thenceforward an accepted worshipper. So Christians, gathered round the eucharistic table *in peace*, are continually reminded by the broken body and shed blood of the sacrifice of Christ our passover; on the ground of which we are safe from the destroying angel. The sacrificial death of Christ is thus the foundation both of *peace* and of separation from the Egypt of this world.

(β) Offering προσφορά, מִנְחָה

But peace and separation from judgment are not all that the Christian requires, he also needs instruction as to access to God, and this he has in connection with the priestly offering.

We call it the priestly offering by way of eminence as having upon it very specially the stamp of priestly service.

We read in both the fifth and eighth chapters that a high priest is ordained to *offer gifts* προσφέρειν δωρὰ, and the name of the act is the very noun, προσφορά, (from the verb) expressing this priestly service. Moreover, it has particularly the character of *gift*. It is the translation of מִנְחָה in Psalm xl., and this is used more than thirty times in the Old Testament with the simple meaning of *gift* or *present*.

We have already noticed that, whilst it is as abhorrent to the language of Scripture as it is to every Christian feeling, to speak of Christ having *slain* Himself, it is beautifully consistent to say that he *offered* Himself; and accordingly we read that "He *offered Himself without spot to God*,"<sup>2</sup> and that He was once *offered* to bear the sins of many, and again after shewing how He had taken away all the old

<sup>2</sup> Heb. ix. 14.



offerings of the law, it is added, "But this man, after he had *offered* one [slain] sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." As soon as the work of Christ as High Priest comes in, the proper priestly word is introduced, and the slain victim is looked upon as a *gift* to God. Christ has loved us and *given* Himself for us, an *offering* and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.

(γ) Burnt-offering, ὁλοκαυτώμα.

The book of Leviticus opens with the account of the burnt-offering, shewing us the manner of drawing near to God under a dispensation in which the nation were looked upon as accepted worshippers on the ground of sacrifice and covenant with sprinkled blood.<sup>3</sup> In the establishment of this economy, as in Exodus, the burnt-offerings had held a conspicuous place, and now we have special instruction as to the manner in which individuals were permitted to make their approach with acceptance. Moses is directed to tell the children of Israel how they were to bring their offerings (קָרְבָּן, *korban*) to the Lord. The word is derived from one which signifies to approach, to draw near, evidently implying a present brought to a superior in order to the personal acceptance of the donor. Both the verb and the noun seem to be used in a specially consecrated sense. Thus we read in Psalm lxxiii. 28, "But it is good for me to *draw near* to God;" also in Isaiah lviii. 2, "They take delight in *approaching* to God." If this *consecrated gift* (as we may consequently call the *korban*) were a burnt-offering, it must in the first place be a male without blemish. It must have all possible perfect-

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xxiv.

ness and purity, otherwise it were a profanation of the name of the Lord;<sup>4</sup> and, as the prophet shews, no acceptance even by an earthly governor could be looked for from a polluted offering. "Will He be pleased with thee, or accept thy offering?" he enquires, with much force of reproof. So the inwards and the legs of the victim were to be washed with water by the priests.

Then follows the direction, "He shall offer it of his own voluntary will, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." This should certainly be translated (as in chap. xxiii. 11) for *his acceptance*, or to *be accepted for him*. Thus Isaiah says of sacrifices, "They shall come up *with acceptance* (not with voluntary will) on my altar;"<sup>5</sup> and Jeremiah, on the contrary, says of the offerings of evil worshippers, "Your burnt-offerings are not *acceptable*," which is the same "*for acceptance*" as in our text. It was to be at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. The very entrance was marked by sacrifice. Thus Christ says, "I am *the way*." There is no other possible means of drawing near to God than by faith in Him.

This is still more directly taught in the next act—the worshipper putting his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering—because this evidently was intended to identify the worshipper with his offering, and consequently to imply the transfer of sins unto Him. "This laying on of hands was a rite of transmission, as it were, of the man's sin unto the sacrifice that was to die for him; and in his death, which was now ready, he acknowledged his own desert to

<sup>4</sup> Malachi i.

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah lx. 7.

die, and so it was a figure of the laying of our sins upon Christ and an emblem of repentance."<sup>6</sup>

The worshipper, according to Jewish tradition, must lay his hands upon him *in the court* of the tabernacle, and if he laid his hands upon him before he came into the court, *he must do it there again*. He must lay on his hands *himself*, and *might not do it by proxy*, and he was to lean with *all his force*. All this seems well connected with the idea of *individual acceptance*.

(δ) The sin-offering.

We next come to the sin-offering, which, though last mentioned, did really lie at the foundation of all. This is evident from the constitution of the Jewish economy, which rested, in the first place, on the annual day of atonement; and next on the special Point in the services of that day, when the high priest went in with the blood of the sin-offerings to sprinkle with his finger the blood upon the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat. This was the ATONEMENT, without which all would have gone to ruin.

It is the same in reference to the Christian economy, for we are told that Christ *by His own blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained ETERNAL redemption for us*; and again, more particularly, that "the bodies of those beasts (sin-offerings) whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin are burned without the camp: *wherefore Jesus also*, that He might sanctify the people *with His own blood*, suffered without the gate."

This burning without the camp was with *devouring*

<sup>6</sup> Lightfoot's Works, ix. p. 72.

fire, as it is said in Leviticus—"The whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and *burn him on the wood with fire. Where the ashes are poured out shall he be burned up.*" Thus the place without the gate, a place unclean to the Jew, the place of a skull (Golgotha), the accursed death of the cross, and the type we are considering, all conspired to show the dreadful character of that hour when Christ was *made sin* for us.

The sin-offering availed, according to the Jews, for the highest offences of ignorance, even for those which, if done wilfully, had deserved cutting off.<sup>7</sup> It is perhaps not without reference to this view that Peter, when opening the door of faith to the Jews in Acts iii. says, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Again, may we not see the same plea of ignorance in the blessed and ever-memorable words of our Lord, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do?" So Christ "died to prevent a curse and cutting off."<sup>8</sup>

#### CHRIST THE SURETY OF A BETTER COVENANT.

##### *The Amen and Oath of God.*

But the full glory of Christ's sacrifice as the sin-offering rises much higher, and descends into deeper depths than were present to the Jewish mind in the phrase just quoted. He not only died to prevent a curse, but He was "*made a curse for us*;" "for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree;" and consequently His blood cleanseth us from *all*

<sup>7</sup> Lightfoot, ix. 70.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. ix. 83.

sin; and by virtue of His giving Himself for us He became the AMEN—the One in whom all the promises of God are Yea and Amen for ever—the mediator of the new covenant—the covenant victim which rendered the whole secure. Hence He is called the SURETY of a better covenant.

We take this to be the meaning of *the oath of God* spoken of in chapter six of our Epistle. For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, saying, Surely, <sup>2</sup>Ἐμὲν. This form of words, used by heathen authors “to introduce the *very words of an oath*,”<sup>3</sup> is the rendering of “By myself have I sworn” in Genesis. The reason given is that God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, interposed with an oath. Now the nature of an oath is such as always to bring into question something more or less precious to the possessor if faithfulness is violated; and in this respect it differs from simple promise. Thus Christ instructs His disciples not to swear by heaven, for it is GOD’S *throne*; nor by the earth, for it is His *footstool*; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of *the great King*. Neither shalt thou swear by *thy* head (which it might seem more lawful for a man to imperil), “because thou canst not make one hair white or black.”<sup>1</sup> Now in this case, in which the Almighty One, because He could swear by no greater, swears by *Himself*; He seems to bring into court His own being and existence, as connected with the stability of His promises. In this sense Christ is the Amen of God. This word Amen is of singular

<sup>2</sup> Liddell and Scott. *Sub voce*.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 34.

utility in the gospels; and thus in the gospel of John alone it is found twenty-five times, in a re-duplicated form, and translated "*Verily, verily.*" It has become a familiar and household word in English, and yet is only partially understood. It has its aspect in reference to God Himself, and also in reference to His people. As regards God, it is the special title which He claims for Himself in the song of Moses—"A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He."<sup>2</sup> And Moses exhorts the people to "know that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy."<sup>3</sup> The student of Hebrew will recognize in this description of the character of God, as *making true* His word, that which leads us to the understanding, as regards the divine promises, of the addition of "Amen:" which enters into the above expressions, implying, as a noun, faithfulness and truth; as an adjective, "firm" (as a pillar or a rock); as a verb, "to stay, support, make stable;" and, figuratively, "to trust, to confide in, and so to believe."<sup>4</sup> So that in believing, His people set their Amen to the promises of God. Thus Abraham believed in the Lord, and He counted it to Him for righteousness. Of others it is said that the wrath of the Lord was kindled because they refused to believe His word, or in their hearts "to Amen" His declarations.

We thus are led into the understanding of a connection between the truth and faithfulness of God to His promises and Christ, who is the truth itself, and who is not only styled *the Amen* in the book of

<sup>2</sup> אֱלֹהֵי אֱמֻנָה      <sup>3</sup> Deut. vii. 9. תֵּאֵל תִּנְאֻמִּין

<sup>4</sup> See *Ges. Lexicon*, sub voce, אָמֵן

the Revelation, but seems to be pointed out by the prophet Isaiah as the object of worship in the coming age under this dispensation; for "the Lord God" (he says) "shall slay thee, and call His servants by another name: that he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth ('the God Amen'); and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth."<sup>5</sup> Christ then became surety for His people, and willingly encountered the responsibilities of suretyship.<sup>6</sup> He who is "that eternal life which was with the Father" came forth to encounter death, and to be raised again from the dead, in order that the mercies shown to believers might be the *sure mercies* of the Beloved. He is "the great Shepherd of the sheep brought again from the dead through the blood of an everlasting covenant." We come thus to understand that He is the covenant victim whose death must necessarily be presented (*φέρεσθαι*) in order that the oath of God should be sure to all the heirs of promise *over the slain victim* (for a covenant is of force *over the dead*), and that they should have Him continually before the view of their faith as the very substance of their hopes within the veil; "for if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins."

#### EXPLANATION OF COVENANT.

The notion of Covenant must be one of the greatest antiquity. It can scarcely be supposed that any settled state of society can have existed without an appeal of some kind to a Supreme Being, to give the weight and authority of His superior sanction to the

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah lxxv. 16.

<sup>6</sup> See Genesis xliii. 9.

engagements made directly in His presence, and for the breach of which special punishment was invoked. In Leviticus,<sup>7</sup> provision is made for putting a witness on his oath, and in Matthew<sup>8</sup> our Lord, as "under the law," and in this, as in everything else—fulfilling all righteousness—responded at once when thus charged on oath to declare the truth, although before this he had (under a false and frivolous charge) held his peace. "And the high priest arose, and said unto Him, Answerest Thou nothing? what is it which these witness against Thee? But Jesus *held His peace*. And the high priest answered and said unto Him, I *adjure Thee by the living God*, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, *Thou hast said*."

We must then look upon the judicial oath as a divine institution, and we shall not be surprised to trace out the kindred institution of *Covenant*, as so fundamentally interwoven with the truths of revelation, that the oracles of God are called Η ΠΑΛΑΙΑ ΚΑΙ Η ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ, or unquestionably, the Old and New Covenant. We say *unquestionably*, because we presume that no one will deny that διαθήκη is, as regards the old Covenant, the translation of בְּרִית, to which it is impossible to attach the idea of Testament; and we maintain that if the *old* Covenant were indeed a Covenant, the *new* must partake of the same nature; as is indeed abundantly shewn in the pages of our epistle.

A Covenant is then *an embodied oath*, ordinarily confirmed by the sacrifice of a victim, and attested by some permanent visible sign or symbol to keep

<sup>7</sup> Chap. v. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Chap. xxvi. 63.



the transaction in memory. All these things we find in the record of the covenant established between Laban and Jacob—the appeal to the All-seeing eye, “Jehovah watch between me and thee.”—The sacrifices (זִבְחֵי *θυσια*, see above) offered on the mount, and the heap and the pillar as witness. The usual expression, “let us *cut* a covenant,” seems to imply the relation of sacrifice to its confirmation even more closely than the narrative itself.

When Rahab requests the spies to swear unto her by Jehovah, she adds, “And give me a true token,” (“a *token* נִסִּים, *visible sign of truth*,”) and this leads on to the scarlet thread being displayed as reminding them of their oath; the oath in this case partakes of the nature of a covenant.

We have in Jeremiah xxxiv. a very clear reference to the manner of entering into a covenant as practised at that time. “And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made (*cut*) before me, *when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof*, the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land, *which passed between the parts of the calf*; I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life; and *their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth.*” Thus was the breach of the covenant to be avenged in the very manner which its expressive stipulations invoked. We now transcribe the words of a celebrated Jewish commentator on Exodus, shewing the way in which the

notion of *covenant* must have been familiarised to the readers of the epistle to the Hebrews.

"*The blood of the covenant is the blood by the shedding of which a league is sanctioned.*" But the meaning of this rite seems to have been, that as the blood of the sacrifice was shed and sprinkled in all directions, in a similar manner the blood of him who would break the alliance was to be shed. Clericus compares herewith an analogous ceremony prevalent among the Romans in concluding treaties. For the fecial priest who ratified the treaty spoke among others the following words, as Livy (vol. i. p. 24) relates. "Hear, O Jupiter, that the Roman people will not, under any condition, first swerve from this treaty; if they first swerve by public concert, by wicked fraud, on that day, do thou, O Jupiter, so strike the Roman people, as I shall here this day strike this beast; and do thou strike them so much the more, as thou art more able and more powerful, and the mightier and stronger thou art. (Compare Rosenmüller, *ad hoc*.) Similarly *Iliad*, iii. 298-301, the spilling of wine is symbolized."

Ζεῦ κύδιστε, μέγιστε, καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι  
 Ὅπ πότεροι πρότεροι ὑπὲρ ὄρκια πημήνεια  
 Ὡδέ σφ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέει, ὥς ὅδε οἶνος  
 Αὐτῶν καὶ τεκέων, κ.τ.λ.

"Hear, mighty Jove! and all ye gods on high,  
 And may their blood, who first the league confound,  
 Shed like this wine, disdain the thirsty ground."

*I'ope's Translation.*

De Sola, another Jewish writer, remarks in his commentary on Genesis xv., "The carcase of the victim having been divided lengthwise into two

° Kalisch on Exodus.

equal parts, they were placed opposite to each other, the covenanting parties (sometimes whole armies) approached at the opposite ends of the passage thus formed, and meeting in the middle took the oath. From the text in Jeremiah above quoted, it appears that the signification of the act was, that those who should break that oath should be treated as the divided victim. Hence appears to be the origin of the phrase כרת *lit. to cut*, in connection with a covenant, so frequent in the Holy Scripture; which, without a knowledge of this ancient custom, would be inexplicable."

We are now prepared to see that the Hebrews to whom the epistle was written, could understand the word *διαθήκη* in no other sense than the Old Testament meaning of *covenant*, and that consequently they would at once comprehend the word *μεσίτης* (mediator) when spoken as to the new covenant as implying Christ as the victim slain for its confirmation, "that by means of His death they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." They would not entertain the supposition that the Holy Ghost inspiring the writer would give forth a specimen of confused, mistaken, and illogical reasoning, such as is presented by our authorized translation, which, following the bad guidance of the Romish Vulgate, goes off immediately to translate *διαθήκη* *testamentum* in the Latin forensic sense, a sense be it remembered foreign to all Jewish customs, and quite alien to their thoughts. Moreover the translators proceed with their commentary instead of a translation, when they say that "a testament is of force *after men are dead*," the literal version being

this, "a covenant is of force *over dead things*, or *over dead persons*," the original admitting of either the neuter or masculine gender, and thus not inaptly bringing before us the slain sacrifices, which being *males* might properly be spoken of in the masculine gender.<sup>1</sup> This remark applies equally to the word *διαθέμενος* which being in the middle voice, and masculine gender signifies the male victim by whose blood shedding the covenant (*διαθήκη*) *became a covenant indeed*, otherwise it would have been of no strength at all whilst the covenant victim lived. The words seem to be most appropriately chosen; for the middle voice exactly suits the position in which Christ was placed as the *mediator*, and the masculine gender, whilst not inappropriate as to the victims, was *needful* to convey the implied reference to Christ Himself as *the* victim.

We dismiss to the Appendix some further critical remarks, and proceed to contemplate the bearing of all this question of covenant on "the ways of God with man," as recorded in Scripture.

We turn first to the covenant established on the cessation of the flood, when we are told "Noah builded an altar to Jehovah, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour, and the Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake . . . neither will I again smite any more every thing living as I have done. While the earth remaineth seed time, and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease."

<sup>1</sup> Thus "burn *him* on the wood with fire." (Lev. iv. 12.)

The covenant is enlarged and extended in the next chapter, and the rainbow is set as a visible sign of the covenant: "And God said to Noah this is the token **וַיִּשָּׂא** of the covenant which I have established between me, and all flesh that is upon the earth."<sup>2</sup>

In the fifteenth chapter of Genesis we have the record of a wonderful transaction, in which the Lord was pleased to grant to Abraham,—in answer to his prayer, "*Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit [the land]?*"—a covenant token of His faithfulness. The sacrifices were provided and carefully divided asunder, with the exception of the birds, and then the promise was given to Abram in a deep trance-like sleep, and confirmed by the appearance of a smoking furnace and a burning lamp, that passed between

<sup>2</sup> The recollection of this seems to have lingered long amongst the descendants of Noah. Thus among the Greeks we find Iris, the rainbow, or the rainbow goddess, the messenger from God to men. "It is not impossible that her name may be connected with *ἵρω*, I join, whence *ἱρήνη*, so that Iris, the goddess of the rainbow, would be the joiner or conciliator, or the messenger of heaven, who restores peace in nature." \* Similar seems to have been the tradition among the Scandinavian nations, in whose Edda the fractured rainbow falling to earth is a token of the impending universal conflagration. † In the Celtic superstitions "the goddess of the silver wheel," the lady *Arianrod* is described as "of auspicious mien, the dawn of serenity," and interfering on behalf of the Britons by throwing the stream of *the rainbow* around—a stream which scares away violence from the earth." ‡ Among the Chinese, as we were informed by Dr. Gutzlaff, the goddess of mercy is seen in the clouds, together with the rainbow, in paintings, representing the deluge.

\* "Smith's Dictionary," *sub voce*.

† *Bifröstam* sive Iridem, perquam aditus in cœlum ante pandebatur fractam lapsurum esse. . . His peractis injecto igne totum mundum conflagraturum.—*Ita habet Eddæ Mythol*, 30 and 48. *Antiquitatis selectæ Septentrionalis in Keyser. Hamburg*, 1720.

‡ Davies, "The Mythology and Rites of the British Druids," p. 266.

those pieces;—thus in the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham. In the seventeenth chapter, the covenant is confirmed and circumcision is appointed for the token (תּוֹטָה), and the penalty for the omission was *cutting off*.

#### FORMATION OF THE OLD COVENANT.

The Old Covenant, made between Jehovah and His people in the wilderness, is frequently described under the figure of the marriage engagement, as the days of Israel's espousals, and consequently the breach of that contract as adultery. It pledged the faithfulness of the Lord to use all the resources of His power, under all circumstances to protect the nation, and to succour every individual in it whilst they remained true to Him, also to maintain the fruitfulness of the land, and to bless it above all other lands. On the part of Israel, after having thus avouched the Lord to be their God, it claimed their continued allegiance and reliance upon Him alone—"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." It also called for the supreme love of their hearts, "Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thine heart, and soul, and mind, and strength." The Covenant name which the Lord gave seems to be the response due from the creature to the essential glory of the Creator. אֶהְיֶה "I AM," expresses His glorious nature as known to Himself, and to Himself alone; whilst יהוה seems pretty clearly to be represented by the Ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ᾔς καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος of Rev. i., "Him which is, and was, and which is to come;" thus known to His chosen nation, and engaging Himself as the

Eternal (*"l'Eternel"*)<sup>3</sup> on behalf of His frail and short-lived creature man. The true pronunciation of this sacred name is lost. The abbreviated form was presumably the word JAH, as found in Psalm lxviii., "Extol Him that rideth upon the heavens by His name JAH." Thus we have it at the close of the word Hallelujah, literally "Praise ye Jah;" as also frequently compounded in names of men. This was the marriage name condescendingly given by the Lord to the nation, so that every individual Israelite calling upon this name in faith, was entitled to expect even miraculous succour by the special interposition of Jehovah.<sup>4</sup> It seems to have been a sort of infernal *travestie* of this truth that led the Magicians and Gnostics of a later age to suppose that, by recovering the true sacred name, they could call to their assistance all the infinite resources of the Lord of Sabaoth. It was to this that the unbelieving Jews ascribed the miracles of our Saviour.

It was promised to Israel in the wilderness that there should be a place which Jehovah their God should choose out of all their tribes to *put His name there*, and thither were they to seek, and thither were they to come and to bring their offerings, and to eat before Jehovah their God (as if continuing the ceremonies of the covenant), and to rejoice before Him.<sup>5</sup>

In due season "Jehovah appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer,

<sup>3</sup> French Bible.

<sup>4</sup> See Psalms lxxix.; lxxxix. 16; cix. 21; cxlii. 7; Isa. xxvi. 8; Jer. xiv. 7, 21; Ex. xx. 24; 2 Chron. xiv. 11, &c., &c.

<sup>5</sup> Deut. xii. 5.

and have chosen this place for an house of sacrifice;" and connected with this choice the promise, "*Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent* unto the prayer that is made in this place; for now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and *mine eyes and mine heart* shall be there perpetually."<sup>6</sup> This was for the nation as a whole, and thus there was a true centre of national worship, (for the people were in covenant with the Lord,) and even in exile and dispersion they were directed to look again towards the place of the feet of their great king; but this resource was equally availing to the faith of the *individual* Israelite, and Jonah, even though in his apprehension cast out of the Lord's sight, says, "*Yet will I look again towards Thy holy temple.*"

Thus *the name* of the Lord was a strong tower. And even in the days of the Maccabees they could set up their banners in the name of the Lord—this very word Maccabee implying not improbably, "Who is like unto Thee among the gods, O Jehovah?" (מִכַּבִּי initial letters of the above sentence.) As a crowning point to this wondrous covenant came in the fulness of time—first, the promise, "A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and thou shalt call His name Immanuel;" and then, in due season, the annunciation, "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name Jesus," with the explanation, "for He shall save His people from their sins." This was all needed in order that Jehovah, who had entered into covenant with His people, might become "Jehovah Zidkenu"—the *Lord*

<sup>6</sup> 2 Chron. vii. 12, 16.



*their righteousness*; or, in the language of our epistle, "For *this cause* He is the Mediator of the new covenant, that by means of death, *for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant*, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." How was this effected? We learn in Isaiah liii., "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

I conclude, from what precedes, that every *faithful* Israelite would be saved; but "they are not all Israel who are *of* Israel."

Christ, the Amen of God, thus becomes the covenant victim for the sins of His people.

This leads on to the consideration of the manner in which the covenant was formed.

#### THE COVENANT AND ITS VICTIMS.

We have the mode in which the covenant was compacted in the twenty-fourth chapter of Exodus. The people promise obedience to all the words of the Lord and all the judgments. Then Moses built an altar and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel, and, as the priesthood was not yet established, the young men of Israel are appointed to offer peace-offerings of oxen unto Jehovah. The blood, which we are told is *the life*, was then carefully collected and divided into two portions. One half Moses sprinkled or scattered on the altar, which must have been thus deluged, as it were, with blood. This seems to shew clearly that the *life* of the victim was made an offering for sin and for breaches of the covenant, since the altar stood as the representative of God. It will be observed that there is no ques-

tion here of *active obedience* on the part of the animals slain. They simply ratified the covenant by yielding their lives to the stroke of the slayer. A *passive*, or, at all events, nothing more than a *middle*, position can be assigned to them. Moses then took *the book of the covenant*, and read in the audience of the people, and they said, "All that Jehovah hath said will we do, and be obedient." Charged as the people were with the fearful responsibility of obedience, Moses then took the blood, and sprinkled the people (and also, as it would seem, the book), implying a curse upon any who should not continue in the observance of all that the Lord had commanded. Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel then went up, and they saw the God of Israel, and He laid not His hand upon them: also they did eat and drink." Thus, as remarked by a Jewish writer:<sup>7</sup> "God promised to be *ever near His people*, and Israel pledged itself never to be faithless to its God."

(a) The parties to the covenant.

These were clearly Jehovah and the nation of Israel, yet not in an exclusive, but in an inclusive sense. They were taught that Jehovah loved the stranger,<sup>8</sup> and that they likewise were to feel like affection for such, knowing that they had been strangers in the land of Egypt.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, provision was made for the special case of the stranger, as in the covenant in the land of Moab,<sup>1</sup> when it was said, "Ye stand all of you before Jehovah your God

<sup>7</sup> Kalisch, Ex. p. 469.

<sup>8</sup> Deut. x. 18.

<sup>9</sup> Deut. x. 19.

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxix.

. . . . that thou shouldest enter into covenant with Jehovah thy God, and into His oath, which Jehovah thy God maketh with thee this day: that He may establish thee to day for a people unto Himself, and that He may be unto thee a God, as He hath said unto thee. . . . Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; but with *him that standeth here with us* this day before Jehovah our God, and also with him that is *not here with us* this day."

Too much overlooked is this liberal and comprehensive spirit of the old covenant, but we see it abundantly confirmed in the prophet Isaiah, where a blessing is pronounced on every son of man that layeth hold of the Lord's salvation, and keepeth the Sabbath, and does the things that please Him, and *taketh hold of His covenant*. The sons of the stranger were not to say that they were separated from the Lord; nor was the eunuch to say, I am a dry tree. For the same acceptance of sacrifice was promised them as to Israel, and they were made joyful in His house of prayer.

The commencement of the sixth chapter of our epistle speaks apparently of *the nation* under the old covenant as having been once enlightened, and having tasted the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost (the prophetic gifts), and having tasted the good word of God and the powers of the coming age, and having fallen away. These presented the aspect of a hopelessly barren soil, quite in contrast with the Christians amongst them who were flourishing under the dew and the sunshine of God's favour, now transferred to the new recipients of His gifts.

## THE NEW COVENANT.

The three first evangelists record in nearly the same words the expressions used by our Lord in instituting the Lord's Supper. Matthew says: "He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament (διαθήκης), which is shed (ἐκχυνόμενον) for many for the remission of sins."<sup>2</sup> Mark records that "He said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament (διαθήκης), which is shed (ἐκχυνόμενον) for many."<sup>3</sup> Luke describes our Lord as saying: "This cup is the new covenant (διαθήκη) in my blood, which is shed (ἐκχυνόμενον) for you."<sup>4</sup>

The reader will note the strict accordance of the important Greek words we have quoted; and will also observe that the word *shed* is peculiar, and certainly reminds of the equally remarkable word (שָׁפַךְ) used in the command to *pour all the blood* of the sin-offering beside the bottom of the altar."<sup>5</sup>

This is language suited to the willing *victim* and the adorable sin-bearer; for "He loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood."

All the power and instruction of the words—and we might add all their meaning—is lost by the false translation substituting *testament* for covenant.

The Apostle Paul accords most nearly with Luke, and omits in the special instructions to the Corinthians the direct mention of the *shedding* of the blood. He says: "After the same manner also He

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi. 27, 28.    <sup>3</sup> Mark xiv. 24.    <sup>4</sup> Luke xxii. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Exodus xxix. 12; Lev. iv. 7, 18, 25, 30.

took the cup when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament (διαθήκη) in my blood." We fail to apprehend what meaning could attach to these words as they stand in our translation; whilst in the sense of the blood of the covenant they are full of most precious comfort to the soul of the believer.

If we would learn in what sense these words were understood by the Apostle himself we must read the next verses, which declare, that "whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, *unworthily*, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."<sup>6</sup> Wherefore, but because he profanes the sign and symbol of the covenant.

We learn further that he looked upon "the cup of blessing which we bless" as "the *communion* of the blood of Christ."<sup>7</sup> Is not this a figurative expression exactly corresponding to the position of the people of Israel when, sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifices of the old covenant, they all had communion in the blood then shed? So Christians have all communion in *the blood of the new covenant*, and must not *drink of the cup of demons*, nor be partakers of *the table of demons*. All this is intelligible enough if we read the word as covenant, but quite otherwise if read as *testament*.

When the same apostle, speaking for himself and his fellows, says, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament"<sup>8</sup> (διακόνους καινης διαθήκης), it is obvious that he intends "servants of the new covenant," as we may perceive by extending our view to the end of the fifth and beginning of the

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 27.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 6.

sixth chapter of the same epistle,<sup>9</sup> where he more particularly defines what this service consists in. "God hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath committed to us the ministry (*διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς*) of reconciliation; to wit, that *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself*, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are *ambassadors for Christ*," &c. We can understand what it is to be ambassadors of a covenant treaty of peace, but "*ambassadors of a testament*" would be an expression devoid of meaning.

Paul dwells somewhat on the two covenants in Galatians, but, as it would seem from chap. iv. 21, rather in condescension to the weakness of the converts. The one is allegorically Agar, the bondwoman; the other apparently is [*Ainen*] *promise*, or the free woman, of whom, he says, we are children.

It is under this appellation of *promise* that Paul chiefly defines the glorious truths of the new covenant, *e.g.*, in Titus he speaks of himself as "in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, *promised before the world began*." Compare also Gal. iii., where he says that if a covenant be *confirmed*,<sup>1</sup> no man *disannulleth* or *addeth* thereto. This, he says, took place in reference to the covenant of grace made with Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the law. This could not be said of testament, and there was surely no death of a testator.

In the Epistle to the Romans "the obedience of faith" consists in believing in "Christ," whom God

<sup>9</sup> 2 Cor. v. vi.

<sup>1</sup> See under the Amen of God, page 75.

hath set forth to be "*a propitiation through faith in His blood.*"

The grounds of Paul's ambassadorship were these, that God had made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, or in other words, made Christ to be a sin-offering.

The testimony-bearing of John proceeds on this fact, that the Word was made flesh, that He was the Lamb of God wounded for our transgressions, and that he had seen the blood and water flow from His side when pierced by the Roman soldier. "And he that saw it bare *record*, and his *record* is true : and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe."

In John's first Epistle the same truth is expressed by, "believing the *record* that God gave of His Son." This accords remarkably well with the expressions in the Gospel of John.

The Epistle to the Hebrews instructs us that God hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son ; therefore our responsibility is great to listen, that if we through faith and patience follow Him we shall obtain the promises, since the God of peace hath brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of an *everlasting* covenant, even our Lord Jesus.

In the Hebrews the people of God are those "who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us." These "believe to the saving of the soul." According to the language of the Old Testament prophets they would be described as "laying hold on the covenant," or as "confirming, or saying Amen to the covenant."

It is thus that the blessed Spirit, whose office

it is to *reveal Jesus*, presents Him to us in aspects differing somewhat, but sweetly harmonizing in the result attained.

(β) Antiquity of the covenant.

We hold, then, that the covenant dates its origin from the days of eternity,<sup>2</sup> that it brought the beloved Son, who had there ever rejoiced before the Father, forth from that beloved Father's bosom, saying, "Lo! I come to do Thy will, O God!" He came to offer Himself *once* as the covenant victim, to perfect for ever all those who are sanctified. The failure of the old covenant arose from its being broken on the part of the people; but the strength of the new covenant is found in that Christ came *to do the will* of God, and was "*wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.*"<sup>3</sup> For the transgression of the Lord's people was the stroke upon Him. Hence they have to say, "All we like sheep have gone astray, . . . and Jehovah *hath made the iniquities of us all to meet on Him.*"<sup>4</sup> Thus are the breaches of the covenant all prospectively atoned for by the great *trespass-offering*, since it follows, "Thou shalt make *His soul an offering for sin.*"<sup>5</sup> Thus, not only the sinfulness, but the actual trespasses of all who are within the bounds of the new covenant are quite put away out of God's sight by this one offering; and the righteous Judge may well say, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no

<sup>2</sup> Compare Titus, chap. i. 2. *πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων.*

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah liii.

<sup>4</sup> See marginal reading.

<sup>5</sup> **ⲉϥⲉ** the word for trespass-offering.



more." The blessing of all the redeemed rests on the unshaken rock of *obedience*, the obedience of the holy One who came forth, saying, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God!" Because it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him, and to put Him to grief, and that He bare our sins in His own body on the tree, a *righteousness* becomes available to us. It is the righteousness of God which is unto all and *upon all them* that believe.

(γ) The *formation* of the covenant, which had been *decreed* from eternity, took place at the cross when Jesus exclaimed, "It is finished," and bowed the head, and gave up the ghost; and the soldier pierced his side, and there came out blood and water: for a covenant is of force over the dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the victim liveth. It is, therefore, the *NEW* covenant in contrast with the *OLD* (so far as relates to Israel), but it is an *everlasting covenant* as regards those who have participation in its blessings.

(δ) Christ the token of the new covenant.

It is to be understood that even as the bow in the cloud was and is the token to beholders of the covenant with Noah, and as circumcision was the token of the covenant with Abraham, and the Sabbath the token of the covenant with the nation, so is the person of Christ seen by faith the sign<sup>6</sup> and witness<sup>7</sup> to believers of *the new covenant*, and one of the unchangeable things intended to minister strong consolation to the heirs of promise.

The *person of Christ within the veil* is thus the *HOPE* of those "who have fled for refuge to lay hold

<sup>6</sup> אֹת

<sup>7</sup> עֵד

upon the hope set before us: which we have as an *anchor* of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which hope also entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even Jesus.*"

#### JESUS THE COVENANT NAME

Even as *Jehovah* was under the old covenant, the name uniting the Eternal One with His people, such under the new covenant is the name of *Jesus*. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall *shall save His people* from their sins." His name is the assurance of ever present help,<sup>8</sup> protection,<sup>9</sup> favour,<sup>1</sup> and blessing,<sup>2</sup> for He has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in (*in*) my name, there am I in the midst of them." It is connected with the assurance of answer to prayer, "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it,"<sup>3</sup> and it is associated with the promise of "the Comforter, the Holy Ghost," whom the Father will send *in my name*, as in His blessed leave-taking He declared to His disciples.

#### WHO ARE THE PARTIES TO THE COVENANT?

The Christian community are regarded in this epistle as in the epistle of Peter, as "an holy nation." They are looked upon as having one metropolis, the heavenly Jerusalem, as having one mediator of the new covenant, and as joint participants in the blood of sprinkling. The blood of the everlasting covenant avails for all, who according to another figure are sheep under the care of the great Shepherd.

We have then clearly this answer from the epistle

<sup>8</sup> Luke x. 17; John xiv. 13.    <sup>9</sup> John xvii. 11.    <sup>1</sup> John xiv. 26.

<sup>2</sup> John xx. 31.

<sup>3</sup> John xiv.

itself. The parties to the covenant are in the first place "God even the Father," and our Lord Jesus, the mediator, and then the people for whom He gave Himself, even all those who are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once, or in other words those that have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the Hope.

To all such the gracious assurance is given, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."<sup>4</sup>

#### APOSTASY.

What is meant by "sinning wilfully?" Clearly, according to the analogy of the Old Covenant, apostasy from Christ. He that despised Moses' law was the *presumptuous* transgressor, whose fault answers to the wilfulness spoken of here. Presumptuousness and pride are identified in the word used in Deuteronomy,<sup>5</sup> and it is from such evil that the Psalmist prays to be delivered, when he says "Keep back thy servant also from *presumptuous* (sins) זָרָא." The presumptuousness is specially shewn in this, that he will not hearken unto the priest, or unto the judge.—"That man shall die!" "And all the people shall hear and do no more *presumptuously*." In Numbers xv. we read that there was to be atonement for sins of ignorance, "But the soul that doeth ought *presumptuously* (or *with an high hand*, margin),<sup>6</sup> the same reproacheth Jehovah; and that soul shall be cut off *from among His people*. Because he hath despised the word of Jehovah, and hath broken His commandment, that soul shall *utterly be cut off*; his iniquity shall be upon him."

<sup>4</sup> Heb. x. 17.    <sup>5</sup> Deut. xxvii. 12.    <sup>6</sup> Num. xv. 30.

Then follows the narrative of the sin and punishment of the man who went out to gather sticks on the Sabbath day, thereby despising the token of the Covenant between the Lord and His people in the wilderness. The scripture we are considering seems to refer to this case, when it says, "He that *despised* Moses' law died *without mercy* under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath *trodden under foot* the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, *an unholy thing*, and hath done despite to the Spirit of *grace*?"

These are the "adversaries" who shall fall under the just sentence of being cut off *from among their people*. To the danger of such apostasy, the Hebrews were especially exposed, since, according to the opinion of their old acquaintance, they were doubtless "cast out of the synagogue" from the moment they confessed Christ. The fear of such excommunication was to be met with the dread of a greater excommunication even than this, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Every delusive hope that might be cherished, suggesting that after all it could not be so evil to return to the divinely instituted sacrifices of Moses, was to be repelled by the authoritative declaration—"THERE REMAINETH NO MORE SACRIFICE FOR SINS." He despises the oath of God!

#### THE ALTAR.

The altar is once mentioned towards the close of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and that evidently in a

figurative sense. This is quite in accordance with the general style of instruction in the New Testament, in which the altar, as being pre-eminently an Old Testament institution, has no standing ground. Thus whilst the one Hebrew word for an altar of sacrifice, *מִזְבֵּחַ*, is used more than three hundred and eighty times, the Greek word, *θυσιαστήριον*, which most nearly corresponds thereto, is only used twenty-three times, and of these not once (unless *figuratively*) in reference to Christian worship or sacrifice.

It is easy to see the reason for this when we have fairly grasped and comprehended the meaning of an altar. Concerning this subject we have no information as to the time before the flood. We do not even know whether altars were then erected. The sacrifices brought by Cain and Abel seem to have been offered before the presence of the Lord, revealed in some mysterious manner, connected with "the flaming sword turning every way, to keep the way of the tree of life;" and the thought of Cain seems to have been that he should become entirely an outcast when shut out from this presence. It may be that no materials of the then accursed earth could be made use of for this purpose. But when the flood had removed the guilty race, and with it had washed away the stain, the curse was, if not annulled, at least modified; for we read that the Lord said, "I will no more again curse the ground for man's sake," and Noah and his family were brought out of the ark to occupy the surface of a renewed world. It was then that Noah "builded an altar unto the Lord," doubtless by divine direction, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar; "and the Lord smelled a savour of rest; and the

Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

What then was the altar? We answer that it was a portion of the earth's surface specially consecrated to God, and representing His presence and His claims upon man as His worshipper. It might be of earth, simply raised into a mound or enclosed within the plates or walls of the brazen altar, or it might be of unhewn stones; but according to the divine institution through Moses, it might not be of hewn stone, the work of man not being allowed to be seen on that which was in a certain sense to represent, or rather stand for, the Almighty. The elevation above the surrounding surface seems to have been simply for distinction, and for convenience sake. The Jews looked upon the small elevation of at the utmost ten cubits<sup>7</sup> for their altar as a sort of contrast to the views of surrounding nations. They were forbidden to attach the same meaning to *high places* which was usual in the notions of the heathen.<sup>8</sup> We learn that the early Persian 'made his altar the high places, and the peak of earth o'ergazing summits'—a notion this which is embodied with approbation in the celebrated lines of a great poet, who thus manifests the tendency of the natural mind of man to materialistic views of the nature of the Deity. The very name

<sup>7</sup> 2 Chron. iv. 1. Josephus says fifteen cubits (Herod's temple).

<sup>8</sup> Deut. xii. 1-3.

of God among the primitive Aryan nations was probably connected with *the visible heavens*, and the effort to reach nearer to these was no doubt in the mind of the builders of the tower of Babel, whose top should be "*unto heaven*;" but the people of God were instructed in the spirituality of His essence, and the Israelites (as in Psalm civ.) recognised His power as everywhere present.

"To Him no HIGH, no LOW, no great, no small;  
He fills, He bounds, connects and equals all."

Although the altar was appointed (in a ritualistic sense) to receive the offerings on behalf of the divine Majesty, and it is consequently called (in Ezekiel<sup>9</sup>) *Har-el*, "the mountain of God," it was not by its *elevation* that it was to be conspicuous. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" says Jehovah. "Where is the house that ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest?" Solomon exclaims, "Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded!"<sup>1</sup>

Another, and a most important aspect of the altar, is that, as representing the claims of the infinite One, it was continually calling out for sacrifice. Hence it is denominated in Ezekiel<sup>2</sup> *Ariel*, or the lion of God, and the whole city "where David dwelt" is addressed prophetically<sup>3</sup> by Isaiah as partaking of the same character, since the altar was emphatically the centre of their daily worship, and continually thirst-

<sup>9</sup> Ezek. xliii. 15.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings viii. 27. The boundary of Benjamin just took in the altar, and to this the Jews applied the blessing of Moses, "He shall dwell between his shoulders." Vide Lightfoot's Works, ix. 396.

<sup>2</sup> Ezek. xliii. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah xxix.

ing (as it were) after blood. It is difficult for our minds to take in the amount of slaughter involved in the sacrifices even as they were daily offered. At the consecration of the temple Solomon offered 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep; and because the brazen altar that was before the Lord was too little to receive the burnt-offerings and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings, the king hallowed the *middle of the court* that was before the house of the Lord, for there he offered burnt-offerings and meat-offerings; so he made the whole court into *one altar*. The altar being situated in the lot of Benjamin, the Jews applied to it the prophecy, "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil."<sup>4</sup> We copy from the service-book of the modern synagogue the following note on Lev. ix. 15:—"The altar on which the victims were to be offered is here supposed to be *polluted by their touch*, and therefore was to be purified with the blood of the sacrifice, which was *substituted instead of the forfeited blood of the sinner*." The italics are ours, and are intended to point out the exactness with which tradition has kept up the notion of the pollution and the reconciliation of the altar.<sup>5</sup>

All this is met on behalf of Christian believers by the ONE sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, offered upon the cross *once*, and that *for eternal efficacy*; so that the altar, being appeased, no longer roars like a lion for the sinner's blood, and the cross on

<sup>4</sup> Vide Lightfoot's Works, ix. 395.

<sup>5</sup> It is remarkable how in every age criminals have sought refuge at the altar as a sanctuary to shield them from punishment.



which the precious blood has once been abundantly shed has long since gone to corruption, like any other wood ; and nothing remains for the worshipping congregation of the faithful but for Christ Himself, risen from the dead, to come into their midst, as He did on that ever memorable evening of the first Lord's day, and to say unto them, "PEACE *be unto you*," and to shew them "*His hands and His side*;" or, as He has promised, that "where two or three are gathered together in His name, there He is in the midst."

What then is the earthly centre of their meeting but the *eucharistic table*, to which are brought the happy guests who can by faith understand that the blood has been brought into the holiest, and has obtained eternal redemption for them? These, like the Israelites at the paschal feast, can feed upon Christ, their paschal Lamb, in their hearts, by faith and with thanksgiving, and can know that their place and all their worship is heavenly. The bread is the broken body and the cup is the shed blood of Him whom their souls love. The great company of priests that were once obedient to the faith found the veil rent, their occupation no longer needed, and those who served the tabernacle had no right to eat from their altar.

For the altar in this passage can surely be none other than *the cross* ; since, as a sacrifice is offered on an altar, so Christ was once offered on the cross. But the altar being appeased, there are the *peace-offerings*, and to partake of these was for the worshippers to have the flesh of the sacrifices *imputed* to them and *accepted* for them. This is the worship appointed for Christians as "risen with Christ," and

thus connecting itself most suitably with the first day of the week, the resurrection day, and emphatically "*The Lord's Day.*" For this is also the eighth day—one day beyond the seven which make up the history of this world, and entering thus upon the days of eternity. Surely no Lord's day should pass without Christians assembling themselves around the Lord's table. To look for an altar in such worship would be akin to looking for the body of the sin-offering, when it had been consumed with devouring fire, and the ashes poured out without the camp. Within the earthly Jerusalem the Christian could find no continuing city; and "without the gates" of the chosen city, as "without the camp," were to be found Golgotha, the place of a skull—the place, as it were, of the ashes, and of the leper crying, "Unclean, unclean," and of the reproach of Christ. Cast out from their old traditions, they were called thus to serve Christ in worship of a heavenly character.

#### THE ALTAR IN THE CHURCH.

Let us now consider the result of bringing a veritable altar into the assembly of Christians. In the first place, it is evident that it stands as the representative of unsatisfied claims on the part of the holiness of God.<sup>6</sup> It calls for fresh sacrifices, and for

<sup>6</sup> Compare the *souls under the altar* (in Rev. vi.) represented as crying with a loud voice, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge *our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*" and the response, that they should rest yet a little season; and when this period reaches its consummation in chap. xiv., "another angel came out from the altar, which had power over the fire, and, in answer to his cry, follows judgment on *the vine of the earth.*"

ministering priests to offer those sacrifices. Let us look carefully into this matter, for it involves most serious results.

(a) The need of fresh sacrifices.

Amos saw in vision the Lord standing on the altar, and calling for vengeance on the transgressors; but John, who actually stood by the cross, and saw the blood and water stream from the pierced side of the Saviour, bears testimony that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin." To call for fresh sacrifices after this is to return to the effete and abolished system of Judaism, and to deny the finished work of Christ. It counts the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and rejects the testimony of the Holy Ghost. It is apostasy from Christ, and those guilty of thus contemning Him who declared with His own dying lips, "It is finished," may well remember that to them there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

(β) Sacrificing priests.

Seeing that "a priest must have something to offer," it would have seemed a very hopeless thing to set up again the Levitical priesthood when sacrifices were abolished, and sacrificing priests could consequently find no occupation; but when love of power, of money, and of worldly distinction combine, it is difficult to say what they will not bring about. Accordingly we find by degrees both *altar*, *sacrifice*, and *priest* back again in what was called "the Church," from whence we had thought them banished. It is now at length asserted that "Jesus, our won-

derful God, for our sakes vouchsafes to subject His Almighty Self to the power of man, by immediately descending upon our *altar* when the *priest* pronounces the words of consecration." Hence "as the Lamb without spot He is every day *sacrificed*, and yet always lives—every day eaten, and yet remains entire."<sup>7</sup>

This extraordinary fiction of transubstantiation does certainly hyper-exalt the priest, for it depends on his *intention* in the act of consecration whether the bread and the wine remain as they are, or become "not only the true body of Christ, and whatever appertains to the true mode of existence of a body, as the bones and nerves, but also entire Christ:"<sup>8</sup> and this is all sealed by a curse in true priestly style; for "if any one shall deny that the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore entire Christ, are truly, really, and substantially contained in the sacrament of the most holy eucharist, and shall say that He is only in it as in a sign, or in a figure, or virtually, *let him be accursed.*"<sup>9</sup>

Thus by degrees the clergy obtained what they wanted, and became sacrificing priests to their heart's content.

#### (γ) Results.

Thus was gradually substituted a religion of the flesh, for the religion of the Spirit. But this imitation of Judaism when examined will not bear the least comparison with that which it pleased God to

<sup>7</sup> Litany of the Sacrament.

<sup>8</sup> Vide Catechism of the Council of Trent.

<sup>9</sup> Canons of the Council of Trent. Sess. xiii. Canon 1.

institute for a season, and as a *schoolmaster* until Christ came.

The Church of Rome teaches that Christ "sitting above with the Father, is in the same moment of time *in the hand also of the Priest*, and delivered to such as are willing to receive and embrace Him." Thus the devout Romanist is taught that he receives and swallows not *peace-offerings*, but his actual and veritable God, and that if he has fasted "at any rate since midnight," he may be assured of so digesting his God as to assimilate eternal life. What would happen if a mouse or a dog swallowed the host is not clear; but it is quite certain that, with the most devout intentions the Papist must always be uncertain whether he has swallowed Christ entire and undivided, or simply a piece of bread. Also a congregation must be evermore in doubt, even on the shewing of their greatest doctors, whether in adoring the host they have worshipped the Creator or the creature. For on account of various "defects" the transubstantiation may not have taken place. These defects may originate from various causes. In the first place we notice that, "If any one does not intend to consecrate, but only to do something delusively, also if any hosts remain on the altar through forgetfulness, or if any part of the wine or any host is concealed, and he only intends to consecrate ten, not deciding which ten he intends to consecrate, in these cases he does not consecrate, because intention is necessary." But further if *the sacerdotal order be wanting* in the person offering, if the bread is not of wheat, but largely mixed with potatoe flour for example, if the wine has begun to pass from the vinous into the

acetous fermentation, in all these cases the transformation cannot take place, and the worshipper is ignorantly led into manifest idolatry.

#### THE LORD'S TABLE.

The Reformation uprooted the altar from its "foundations" in the Church, and substituted "a comely and decent table standing on a frame for the holy communion." This was no small or trivial affair, for the altar, as we have seen, was the symbol of a ritual religion, whilst the return to a *table* overthrew the notion of *sacrifice*; for a sacrifice cannot be offered on a table, and with the sacrifice down went the sacrificing priest. This was deeply felt by the priest, who thenceforth was left to recover his position as best he might. The Tracts for the Times were the first call on the priest to awake and arise, or be for ever fallen, and now the zealous labourers in this cause are many. To say more on this subject would be foreign to the present work. With one suggestion we conclude, and it is this: If the Church of England should ever be persuaded to restore the ALTAR, she will become (as in the days of Queen Mary) a persecuting Church to the utmost of her ability.

For this we have (as we think) scriptural authority; for "as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, *even so now.*" Therefore let England beware in time.

NOTE.—Dr. Lightfoot wrote (about 200 years since), "By, '*we have an altar,*' they understand the altar in their Churches, where they administer the Sacrament, and thence they call the Sacrament '*the Sacrament of the altar,*' a title *that hath been too common in England, and which hath cost many a good man very dear.* The Lord grant the title be never known here any more."—*Works*, vii. 242.

## CONCLUSION.

There remain some considerations connected with the speciality of this epistle to which we would now direct our reader's attention.

The doctrine of election—absolute and personal as we are taught it in the Epistle to the Romans—is unknown to the Epistle to the Hebrews. If any election can be traced in this latter, it is rather that of “the holy nation.” Those who are partakers of the privileges of the community are the household of Christ, if they hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast to the end; but there is also a possibility of drawing back into perdition (ὑποστολή εἰς ἀπώλειαν).

This danger of apostasy from Christ is the subject of fervent exhortation, as well as the forsaking the Christian assemblies, which was its premonitory symptom. In this respect we are reminded rather of the Epistles of James and Jude, than of that to the Romans.<sup>1</sup> The well-known Scripture, “The just shall live by faith,” is applied by Paul to the believer's justification; but by the author of the epistle we are contemplating, to the walk of the believer. For the rest, we are deeply impressed with the idiosyncrasy of the epistle, and with the speciality of its modes of instruction. We are persuaded that Paul neither could<sup>2</sup> nor would<sup>3</sup> have written this portion of Scripture, and refer to *Alford's Greek Testament* (vol. iv., Prolegomena, 180–190) for an able

<sup>1</sup> We are thankful to have received and to hold firmly the doctrine of election as taught elsewhere in Scripture, but believe that no one ever received it from this epistle.

<sup>2</sup> c. ii. 1–4; c. xiii. 23.

<sup>3</sup> c. vi. 3; c. iv. 1.

statement of the probable claims of Apollos, with which we concur. As there is absolutely no distinct evidence to show that Paul wrote it, and much tending the other way, the only ground on which the general persuasion can rest must be that of individual opinion. For ourselves we must say that the final result of more than forty years' acquaintance with and admiration of this epistle has been an intense conviction to the contrary.

We believe that it is needful to dispel the above illusion, in order to permit the fair and devout study of this portion of the Word on its own merits. We prize the doctrines *especially revealed to Paul*, but we do not find them in this epistle, and do not think that any benefit can result to the cause of truth by wresting Scripture in order to make it fall in with preconceived notions of theology. It is far better to receive with humbled minds the whole truth as given us in the word in all its length, breadth, and depth, and its marvellous adaptation to our every need in passing through the wilderness towards the Sabbatism of everlasting rest.



## APPENDIX.

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CHAP. i. 12.—The word used in the psalm (*v.* 9) implies “splendid vesture.”

CHAP. ii. 5.—“Habitable world” is the strict version of the original *οικουμένη*, “*orbis terrarum habitabilis*.” (Scap.) It is, therefore, not heaven, but rather this world in the days (or age) of the Messiah.

CHAP. ix. 1–5.—The reader will please to take notice that the translation here follows the reading of the Codex Vaticanus, as edited by Cardinal Maü. Rome, 1857.

CHAP. ix. 16.—TESTATOR—The word *διαθεμενος*, translated in our version *testator* is the second aor. mid. part. of the verb *διατίθημι*, of which the primary meaning is *to appoint*, and cannot be looked upon as equivalent to *διάθετης*, *testator*, which has the full active force of the verb. It has occasioned no little trouble (to say nothing of apparent loss of serenity) to commentators: and yet they do not appear to have really faced the question why the middle voice instead of the active is used here. Surely, a man making his *will* and thus disposing of his property must be looked upon as exercising *active* functions; and thus it appears that the active noun *διάθετης* would express the very thing that was wished if *testator* was intended. Thus, in a passage in Herodotus vii. 6, the word is used of a certain Onomacritus of Athens, and is translated by Rawlinson: “The same who

set forth the prophesies of Musæus in their order," thus giving the full active signification. It is true that we have not here the sense of *disposing by will*, but this is unquestionably one sense of the word; thus in Scapula, ἀδιάθετος "*exponitur etiam intestatus*" (i.e., one who has not exercised this right). This corresponds exactly with the active noun διάθεσις, which is, according to our lexicons, a special, if not the special, word for testament,<sup>1</sup> "*testamentum, extrema voluntas quo moriens disponit et dispensat res suas.*" So<sup>2</sup> θέτης is "one who places," "one who makes a pledge;" θέσις is his action in so doing; θήκη is the "case to put anything in" (theca, repositorium, Sc.); thus partaking of a *passive* signification, and to this corresponds διαθήκη. We might go through the compounds of τίθημι, but it will be sufficient to cite παρένθεσις, "*a putting in besides*" (*parenthesis*), and compare with παρενθήκη—which is "*something put in besides, an addition, appendix*"—this latter *passive*, whilst the former is *active* in its signification.

Now, διαθήκη, *covenant*, passive, agrees very well with διαθέμενος, middle; which middle voice, though it may verge either *towards* the active or the passive, cannot correctly be looked upon as exactly the same as either the one or the other. It seems to have this kind of middle sense, as used in Appian de bell. civ.<sup>3</sup> of a man, διαθέμενος τοὺς ἐνοχλοῦντας, ὡς ἐδύνατο, "*creditoribus, manum injicientibus satisfaciens ut poterat*," where the creditors are active enough, and the poor debtor seems almost passively consenting to the division of his goods among them.

Calmet translates our passage: "Now where there is a testament, διαθήκη—a COVENANT, the death of the testator—διαθεμένου, the CONFIRMER OF THE COVENANT, is necessary." "For a testament—'covenant'—is of no authority,

<sup>1</sup> Scapula.<sup>2</sup> Liddell and Scott.<sup>3</sup> Cited in Scapula.

while the confirmer of the testament—*covenant*—is ‘living;’ that is, while that beast was not slain, between whose divided parts the persons *covenanting* were to pass, the covenant wanted the most solemn token of its ratification.” See further in Calmet, No. cxxix., “Fragments,” p. 207: “The ceremonies quoted in this Fragment contribute greatly to strengthen the propriety of rendering *διαθεμένον* by that victim over which or by which the confirmation of the covenant was particularly made, as of *the covenant-ratificator*.”

Codurcus (in Critic. Sac. lib. v. p. 14) says, “et *διαθεμένος* *passive* hic sumitur non *active*. Estque non *testator* sed ‘*federatus*, is qui cum *fedus* inititur, quem obire mortem *federe* Divino necesse est unde neutrum *fedus* sine sanguine *peractum*.”

In the mind of the former of these commentators the middle voice verges more towards the active; in the latter, towards the passive sense, shewing that the position of the *mediator* of the new covenant may be looked at from two sides, and with equal justice.

“Verbum *Testamenti* propriè dicti juxta institutum jus civile Romanorum *nullo modo quadrat huic loco*. Vox itaque *διαθήκη* his versibus, ut superioribus capitibus atque hoc ipsomet antè et post, ubique reddenda est *Fedus*, *Pactum*, quod a Deo *pangi*, *feriri*, et iniri dicitur. . . .

“Adde quod nullibi vox Hebraica ברית et Græca *διαθήκη* in sacris literis veteris—pro *testamento* significatione illa qua in jure civili Romano usurpatur . . . quæ planè testantur *nullum TESTAMENTO* juxta jus civile Romanorum apud Judæos *locum fuisse*.”—Codurcus, *Annotata in Epist. ad Hebræos*, cap. ix.; *Critic. Sacr.* tom. v. p. 1447.

“At hic autor Hebraici verbi vim *non perpendens* (!) cum Græce scriberet, nam Græcè scriptam hanc Epistolam

vel ex hoc loco evinci potest, siquidem *Hebraicè* NEMO SIC ARGUMENTARI POSSIT, ut ex PACTO testamentum faciat et ideo *testatoris mortem* invehat," &c.—*Castalio, Critic. Sacr.*, v. 1418.

"At D. Hieronymus prodidit vocem quam interpretes verterunt *testamentum*, Hebræis magis sonare pactum aut fedus ברית. Quod si verum est, apparet hanc Epistolam scriptam ab eo qui Hebraicè nesciret (!): id quod haud ita dissimile veri videtur. Certe D. Hieronymus *constanter vertit pactum*. Jam διαθήκη Græcis DISPOSITIONEM sonat magis quam TESTAMENTUM."—*Erasmus, Critic. Sacr.* v. 1417.

CHAP. IX. v. 16.—"Vel his unus locus argumento est, epistolam Hebraice scriptam non fuisse; ברית enim *fædus* Hebræis *non testamentum* significat . . . . quanquam videtur apostolus *nimis infirmæ ratione* inniti ut nullo negotio refutari queat, quod dicit. *Neque enim testamentum condidit* Deus sub lege, sed *fædus pepigit* cum veteri populo," &c.—*Calvin, Comment. (in loco)*. Berlin, 1834, vii. 88.

## ADDENDA.

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THE publication of the Revised Version of the New Testament induces me to reprint the work now presented to the reader, with those further amendments and corrections which seem required for a second edition.

The new revision affords me much encouragement in my work, whilst at the same time it by no means renders further recension needless. It may be thought presumptuous for me to suggest that there has been failure in at least one place, as to the first and most important of all the duties of translators, that of understanding the meaning of the original.

This is evident in their translation of the ninth chapter, in which they have been compelled by their knowledge of Greek to avoid the inconsistency of the Authorised Version, which introduces us in the eighth chapter to "the Mediator of a better Covenant," a new *Covenant* contrasted with the old; and in the ninth chapter, without any warrant from the Greek, changes this designation of our Lord into "the Mediator of the New Testament," contrasted with the first or "Old Testament," and then proceeds to inform us that where "a testament" is there must also of necessity be "the death of the testator!"

Now the One who "left the first Testament" (if for argument's sake we must use this language) was Jehovah, God of Israel. (Ex. xix. xxiv.; Deut. v., &c.) How could

it be said, therefore, that it is of *no strength at all whilst Jehovah liveth*—He who lifts up his hand to heaven, and says, “I live for ever !” (Deut. xxxii. 40.)

The death of the *Testator* is thus an inadmissible thought. Nor is the death of the *Mediator* a more hopeful suggestion. For the mediator in this case was Moses, as he says himself (Deut. v. 5), “I stood between Jehovah and you at that time, to shew you the word of Jehovah,” taken up in Gal. iii.—the law was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. It was not confirmed by the blood of Moses, but by the blood of bulls and of goats ; that is to say, by *victims* appointed for the purpose.

Now it is evident that “a *testament*” does not require victims, but “a *covenant*” does, and a covenant is of no force at all except as confirmed by the sacrifice of the appointed victim, giving it the solemn sanction of an appeal to the Almighty Judge and Ruler of men.

The blood of the victims was therefore sprinkled both on the book and on all the people. (Heb. ix. and Ex. xxiv.) “The book of the covenant” was indelibly stained with “the blood of the covenant.”

Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he sprinkled *on the altar* (thus giving or devoting it to God.)

And he took the *book of the covenant*, and read in the audience of the people, and they said, “All that Jehovah hath said will we do and be obedient.” And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, “Behold the blood of the *covenant*, which Jehovah hath made with you concerning these words.”

Here was then a conditional agreement or *covenant* sanctioned by an appeal to God, confirmed by blood of victims shed ; and altogether dependent on being ratified by creature obedience.

The law therefore rested on two parties, God and man,

with a mediator ; but God is *one*, and there can be no permanent stability but in God Himself, and that which consists entirely in him.

Grace therefore, or *promise*, which is in the Galatians contrasted with law, rests on a covenant previously *confirmed* of God, on the ground of which, when he made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater he swore by himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless thee." Now this oath of God brings in the foreseen obedience unto death of Christ, the appointed victim of the New Covenant ; "for all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen."

All thus proceeds from the love of the Father in sending his Son, and is carried out through the loving obedience of the Son, by whose blood all is ratified ; for his blood is the blood of the new or everlasting covenant, and the preachers of the gospel are ministers of a *new covenant* (see New Version) now freely preached to all the world, and all who believe are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and *sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*."

All rests on the grace and promise of God ; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit concurring in this glorious work of redemption.

"The gospel of the everlasting covenant" should therefore be the title of the book in which the glorious good news is transmitted to us for the obedience of faith.

In all this there is no room for the notion of "testament" or "testatorship," which are both ideas connected with Romish jurisprudence ; and having (as all admit) no place in the book of the old covenant.

In "the New Testament" the only thoughts connected with what might be called testamentary disposition are the words of Christ to His disciples in that wondrous

leave-taking recorded in the Gospel of St. John ; but if 'a legacy,' this is only to his disciples, and cannot be unfolded except to those who are included in the provisions of the will ; nor understood by any except by those who are already made partakers of the presence of the promised Comforter. In this view of the subject, "the gospel of the testament" would be only for the elect. How, then, can any possible meaning be attached to the New Version, when, after having virtually admitted all that I have been saying, by changing the word *testament* into *covenant* in the all-important passage I have quoted as to the preaching of the gospel, they translate thus in Heb. ix. 15-18 ?

"And for this cause he is the Mediator of a new *covenant*, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first *covenant*, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a *testament* (!) is" (but we have been considering quite another thing, and here are misled into absolute incongruity and want of sense) "there must of necessity be the death of him that made it."

If they had but determined to translate *consistently*, they might have said, "For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of him whose death made it a covenant." They would have given us then an intelligible sentence, needing only the further explanation, "for a covenant is of force *over the dead*," which is the right translation, and which *as such* they give us in the margin.

In other places they have adhered to the principle of translating important Greek words by their equivalent in English ; so in this case, if the equivalent of *διαθήκη* is *covenant*, they should in all cases have adhered to this rule of translation.



And that this is the right translation is decided by the original Hebrew word, rendered by the Septuagint *διαθήκη*. The original word admits of only one signification, whilst the Greek word has more varied meanings. As we have in this case to obtain all our ideas from the Hebrew, it is from this source *alone* that we have to derive our explanation—an important fact to bear in mind in considering all that is given us in the Epistle to the Hebrews. If this epistle had been written in Hebrew, no such confusion of ideas could possibly have arisen.

In this translation the Revisers seem to have followed Alford, whose confusion of ideas is very obvious. For instance, he says (in *v.* 20), “Christ, the heir of all things, has bequeathed to us, his people, an everlasting inheritance; has died, sealing the *testament* with his blood.” If he had said sealing the *covenant* with his blood it would have been intelligible; but a testament has no need to be *sealed with blood*—indeed the whole sentence is unintelligible.

Rightly considered, this cannot be looked upon as a question of small importance, or of captious criticism; but as involving the true estimation of the precious blood of Christ.

He himself declared, when instituting the Lord’s supper, “This cup is the *New Covenant* in my blood;” in these words drawing attention to the contrast between the *old* and *new* covenants. The old covenant was sealed with the blood of bulls and of goats, but the new covenant with the inestimably precious blood of Christ. Both covenants were thus ratified by blood; but what a contrast between the efficacy of the sealing!

Now, when we look more closely into this question of sealing, we shall see more distinctly the meaning of covenant, as contradistinguished from testament.

The sealing of the Old Covenant was effected by one

half the blood being offered to God, as sprinkled on the altar, and the remainder sprinkled on the book and on the people. But Christ entered not by the blood of bulls and of goats, but by *his own blood*, into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption. As Mediator of the New Covenant, he has, so to speak, sprinkled half of the blood on the altar ; or, as High Priest, has entered in by the blood into the holy place not made with hands, into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

But his most conspicuous glory, as seen in Revelation v., is as the *Victim* once slain, and now alive again, and that victim the *Lamb of God*, which taketh away the sin of the world.

"I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain."

The Covenant then stands fast in the Victim, who, in the presence of the Father, bears the marks of the wounds by which he was slain for his people.

As regards these his chosen ones, they acknowledge the value and efficacy of his sprinkled blood in the *new song* which records, in ceaseless praise :

"Thou art worthy . . . for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

The gospel then is the good news of a VICTIM whose blood shed is recorded on high, and avails to cleanse from all sin, all those of every nation who are redeemed—not with silver and gold as the first-born Israelites ; but with the *precious blood of Christ*, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. His blood is sprinkled on all the people of his choice.

(A.)

## JACOB AND JOSEPH. (Chap. xi. 21.)

IN Gen. xlvii. 31 we read in our version, "And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head." The Septuagint translates differently, and is literally followed by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews. The variation must be owing to the near likeness of two words in the Hebrew; viz., מִטָּה *mittah*, a bed; and מַטֵּה *mattah*, a staff; or, "specially used of the rod of a king—a sceptre." (Ges. Lex.) Jacob in *bowing himself* towards this in the hand of Joseph seems to have fulfilled the prophetic dream of Joseph in Gen. xxxvii., for which at the time Jacob rebuked Joseph; accounting it an unreasonable and presumptuous expectation on his son's part, that he should see his father "making obeisance" to him. One of the meanings of *ράβδος* is "a staff of office,"<sup>1</sup> and the staff borne by Joseph might well be the *symbol of his authority*.

The prophetic dream of Joseph announced that his father should "make obeisance,"<sup>2</sup> or "bow down," to his favoured son; and the same Hebrew verb is used in the passage we are considering. It is translated by the Septuagint by the same Greek word which is used in Heb. xi.; and this seems to have been the occasion when it was fulfilled. When Jacob first met his exalted son it was on terms of equality. "And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, in Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while."<sup>3</sup>

Now, when the time *drew nigh* that Israel must die,

<sup>1</sup> See Ges. Lex.<sup>2</sup> Gen. xxxvii. 9, 10.<sup>3</sup> Gen. xlv. 29.

he called his son Joseph for a special object ; and having obtained the favour which he sought, he makes "obedience" towards him as his superior; if this be the meaning of the passage. "And Israel bowed himself on the head of the staff, or sceptre;" or, as the Septuagint renders, "the staff of him." "Et adoravit fastigium virgæ ei." (Vulgate, followed by the Douay Testament), "And adored the top of his rod," with this note :

"The apostle here follows the ancient Greek Bible of the seventy interpreters (which translates in this manner Gen. xlvii. 31), and alleges this fact of Jacob, in paying a relative honour and veneration to the top of the rod or sceptre of Joseph, as to a figure of Christ's sceptre and kingdom, as an instance and argument of his faith."

For this latter assertion I can find no authority. It seems to me that Jacob's action more probably resembled that of Esther when she touched the top of the king's sceptre, thus rendering homage to her sovereign. This most comports with *the exact translation* of the original. It is confessedly a most difficult passage. As an instance, and a special one, of the faith of Jacob, it must surely have some particular meaning. This cannot well be ascribed to his extreme weakness; for it is "*after these things*" in the next verse that "one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick," and then follows his blessing both the sons of Joseph; and then after that, in chap. xlix., his calling his sons together and delivering that most interesting prophetic blessing, "And when he had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people."

## (B.)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE CHURCH. (Chap. xii. 23.)

THE Greek word *πανάγυρις* signifies "an assembly of a whole nation, a national festival, solemn assembly." Proceeding on the same lines of interpretation that I have followed throughout, referring to the Old Testament for explanation, I must believe that we have here the equivalent for that Hebrew word *עֵדוּת* which expresses the congregation of the people of Israel, called "the congregation of Israel,"<sup>1</sup> "the congregation of God,"<sup>2</sup> "the congregation of Jehovah,"<sup>3</sup> and especially "the congregation," in Exodus xvi. 3; Lev. iv. 13. It is in the midst of this that Christ, in Psalm xxii., declares that he will praise Jehovah; and also says, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren," thus bringing in the *church*; for immediately after his resurrection he begins to fulfil this promise in his message by Mary, "Go tell my brethren I ascend unto *my Father*, and *your Father*; unto *my God*, and *your God*."

So *in faith* we come to this jubilant assembly of redeemed Israel, no longer gathered together under mount Sinai, but to the heavenly mount Sion, and with Jesus in the midst. (Psalm xxii.) We also behold (what we cannot see here) "the church *one* and *glorified*, the first-born redeemed with blood; the consecrated Levites, the willing and living sacrifices to the everlasting worship of Jehovah—perhaps the living creatures of Rev. v."

"Nearest the throne, and first in song,  
Man shall his hallelujahs raise,  
While wondering angels round him throng,  
And swell the chorus of his praise."

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxxi. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Neh. xiii. 1.

Numb. xvi. 3.

This "church" can hardly be the same as the congregation or general assembly of the whole nation, since the word implies the called-out ones. *Εκκλησία* is "an assembly of the citizens summoned by the crier," in classic usage; or, in the sense here intended, those who are partakers of a heavenly calling.

There seems great analogy between the prophetic announcement of the different ranges of glory which should follow on the sufferings of Christ (*τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας*) in Psalm xxii., in the passage we are considering in the Hebrews, and I suppose also in the book of Revelation.

### (C.)

#### THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference.

This expression, "the righteousness of God,"<sup>1</sup> I take to be more comprehensive than the other, which it includes; viz., "the righteousness of Christ." The former (*δικαιοσύνη*) shows us the *active* righteousness of God, not in the sense of punishing the guilty, but rather as setting forth that wondrous love and wisdom of God which originated the mighty plan of our redemption. The Father's love in giving his Son—the Son coming forth from the bosom of the Father with the language, "Lo I come to do thy will, O God;" the "one obedi-

<sup>1</sup> The R. V. reads in some places without the definite article, and one place with (2 Cor. xxi.); but *ὀργή θεοῦ* is rendered *the* wrath of God. This is not consistent. I adhere to the old reading.

ence" (Rom. v. 18.); "*the obedience of One*" (Rom. v. 19); by which many are constituted "righteous;" and in Heb. x. it is the *accomplished will of God*, by which we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once.

It is the same truth, expressed in somewhat different language, in Hebrews and in Romans.

The "righteousness" I have spoken of above, as availing to justification, is the one obedience, ὑπακοῆς τοῦ ἐνός, "*giving the ear of the one*," which sets right the παρακοή, "*that which has been heard amiss*,"<sup>1</sup> and consequent disobedience of the other head spoken of. It is the ἐν δίκαιωμα, or properly one "amendment of a wrong," which is set against the ἐν παραπτώμα, "one false step" of our first parents.

The righteousness of Christ is then that in which we are constituted righteous—even his own obedience. We stand in Christ; he is made to us righteousness. God has made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God *in him*.

Righteousness is thus imputed to us, not by a legal fiction, but by a real transaction, which the epistle to the Hebrews expresses thus: "For by one offering He hath made perfect for ever those that are sanctified."

"Therefore, my dear brother" (wrote Luther to the Augustinian, George Spenlein), "learn to know Christ and him crucified; learn to despair of yourself, and sing to him such a song as this: 'Lord Jesus, thou art my righteousness, but I am thy sin. Thou hast taken to thee what is mine, and hast given to me what is thine; thou hast taken upon thee what thou wast not, and given to me what I was not.' Take thou heed of striving after a sanctity, wherein thou wouldst be thought a sinner no longer; for Christ dwelleth only with sinners. For this

<sup>1</sup> Ges. Lex. *in loco*.

purpose descended he from heaven, where he dwelleth with the righteous, that he might dwell with sinners also. Ponder well this love of his, and thou wilt enjoy his sweet consolation. For if we are to come at peace of conscience through our own labours, or by our own sufferings, wherefore then did Christ die? Thou wilt therefore find peace nowhere but in Him, when thou, by faith, despairst entirely of thyself and of thy own works."<sup>1</sup> (*Per fiducialem desperationem tui.*)

<sup>1</sup> See *The Watchword of the Reformers—Jehovah Zidkenu*, p. 8.

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